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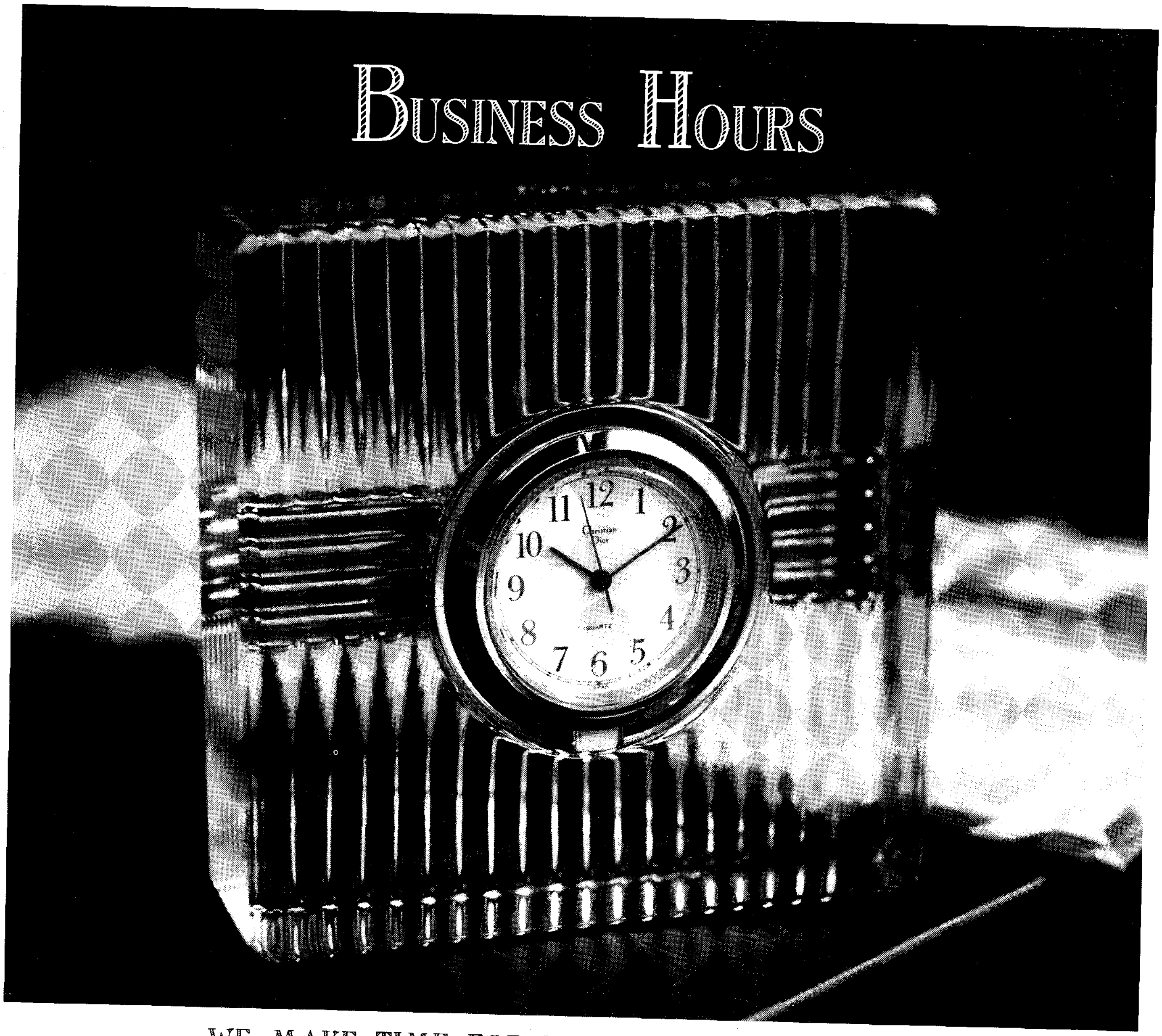

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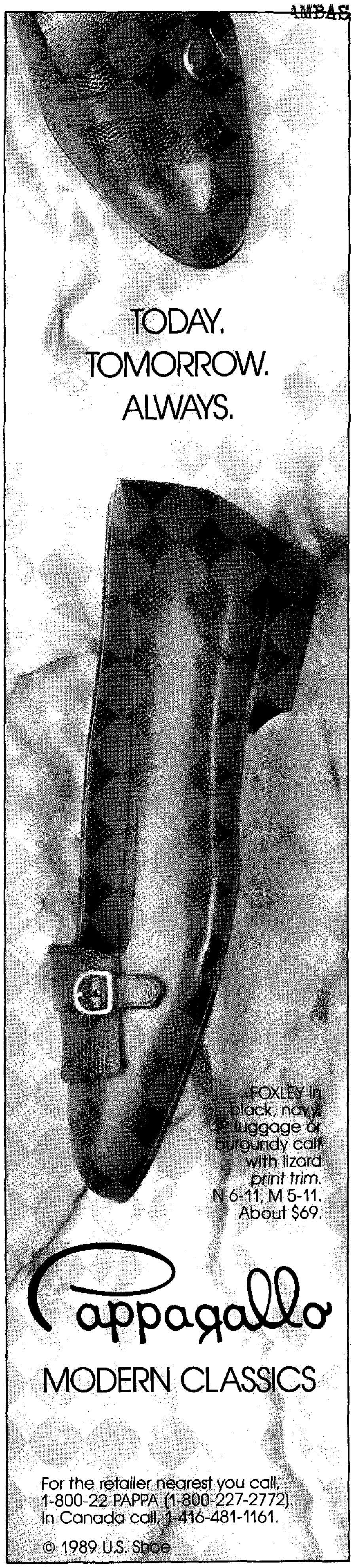

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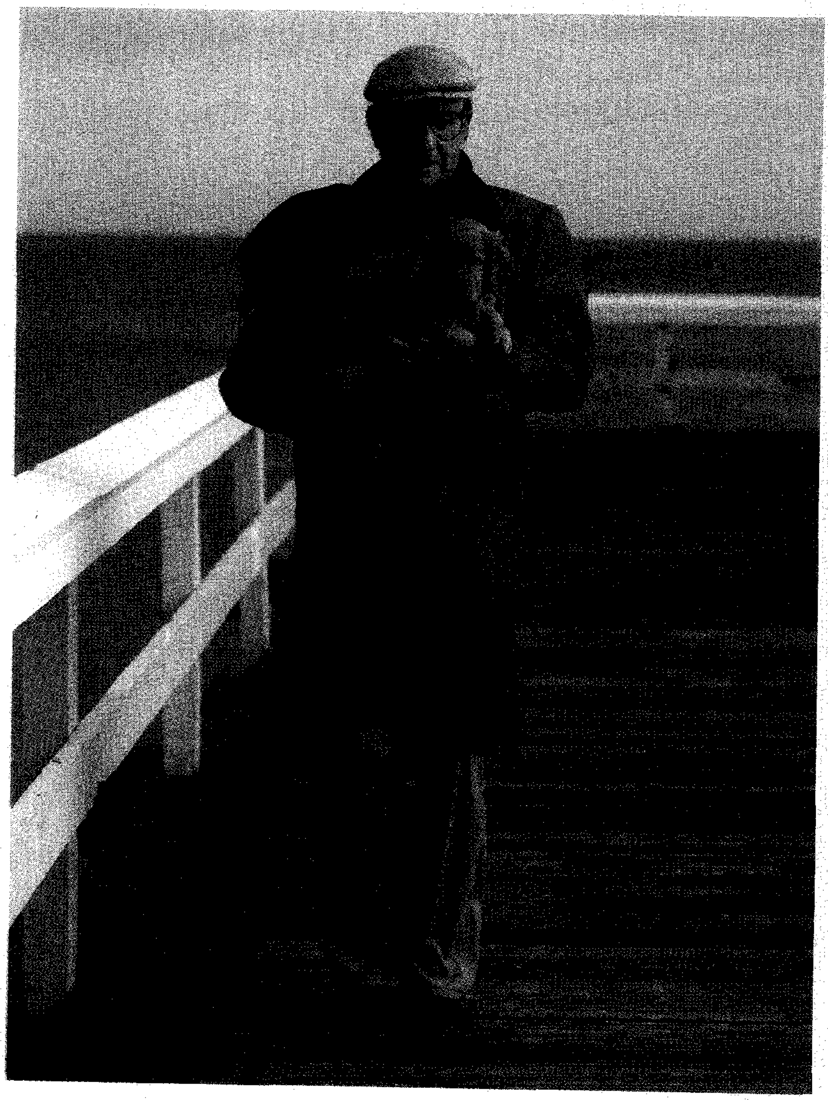

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

WE'RE sorry we went to see "Oh! Calcutta!" the weekend that it closed at the Edison Theatre, and are glad only that we didn't go out of our way to catch the actual final performance. The sentimentality of the occasion, we think, would have distracted us from the essential nastiness of the experience.

The word nasty has different connotations for an Englishman than it does for an American—and Kenneth Tynan, who put the famous "nudie" revue together, was, of course, an Englishman. (His 1965 essay "The Royal Smut-Hound" was probably the single most influential factor in bringing about the abolition of stage censorship in England in 1968, a year before "Oh! Calcutta!" opened in New York.) Where Americans use the word nasty to mean shabby or mean-spirited, the British use it as a euphemism for smutty. Unfortunately, "Oh! Calcutta!" turned out to be nasty only in the soul-destroying American sense: it wasn't about eroticism or liberation or beautiful bodies so much as it was about what creepy people we all are underneath the skin. The songs and sketches—by, among others, John Lennon, Jules Feiffer, Robert Benton and David Newman, Leonard Melfi, Dan Greenburg, Sam Shepard, and Tynan himself—consisted mostly of male-sex-fantasy humor and sixties antiestablishment shockery, but used sex only as an occasion for being cruel or crude.

Was this, we wondered, what Tynan had had in mind when he conceived of a "cool, witty, and sophisticated tease"? Probably not. (His original plan involved work by Joe Orton, Edna O'Brien, and David Mercer.) But the show's tone seemed very much in keeping with the behavior of the Edison staff: the sadistic usher who wouldn't let patrons seat themselves (despite the fact that he had no programs to give them) but kept everyone waiting in a well-behaved milk-and-cookies line; the house manager, who wouldn't help us find a program, so that we had to crawl about on our hands and knees looking for one under the seats; and the desk clerk outside the theatre in the Hotel Edison, whom we overheard berating a foreign guest for having asked to have a couple of towels sent up to his room.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

Buzzsaw Berkeley—A new musical comedy, conceived by Christopher Ashley and Doug Wright. The score and lyrics are by Michael-John LaChiusa, and the book is by Mr. Wright. The cast includes Ethyl Eichelberger and Keith Reddin. Previews through Aug. 19. Opens Aug. 20 at 3. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

Privates on Parade—Jim Dale and Simon Jones star in the 1977 musical by Peter Nichols (book and lyrics) and Denis King (score). Previews through Aug. 20. Opens Aug. 22 at 8. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)

Sweeney Todd—Bob Gunton and Beth Fowler in the York Theatre Company's production of the Sondheim musical, which had a brief run uptown last spring. Susan H. Schulman is the director. In previews. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23			

Titus Andronicus—The second, and final, offering in the New York Shakespeare Festival's summer series of plays in Central Park. Donald Moffat is cast in the title role, Kate Mulgrew is Tamora, and Keith David is Aaron. The director is Michael Maggio. Previews through Aug. 16. Opens Aug. 17 at 8, and runs through Sept. 3. (Delacorte Theatre, Central Park near W. 81st St. For information about free tickets, which are required, call 861-7277.)

NEW THIS SEASON

Aristocrats—Brian Friel's portrait of the family of Judge O'Donnell, of Ballybeg Hall, in Donegal, is witty, ironic, and loving. It is faultlessly performed by Niall Buggy (an astonishing actor who got his start at the Abbey Theatre), John Pankow, and John Christopher Jones, among others, under the direction of Robin Lefèvre. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/8/89.) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-0102.)

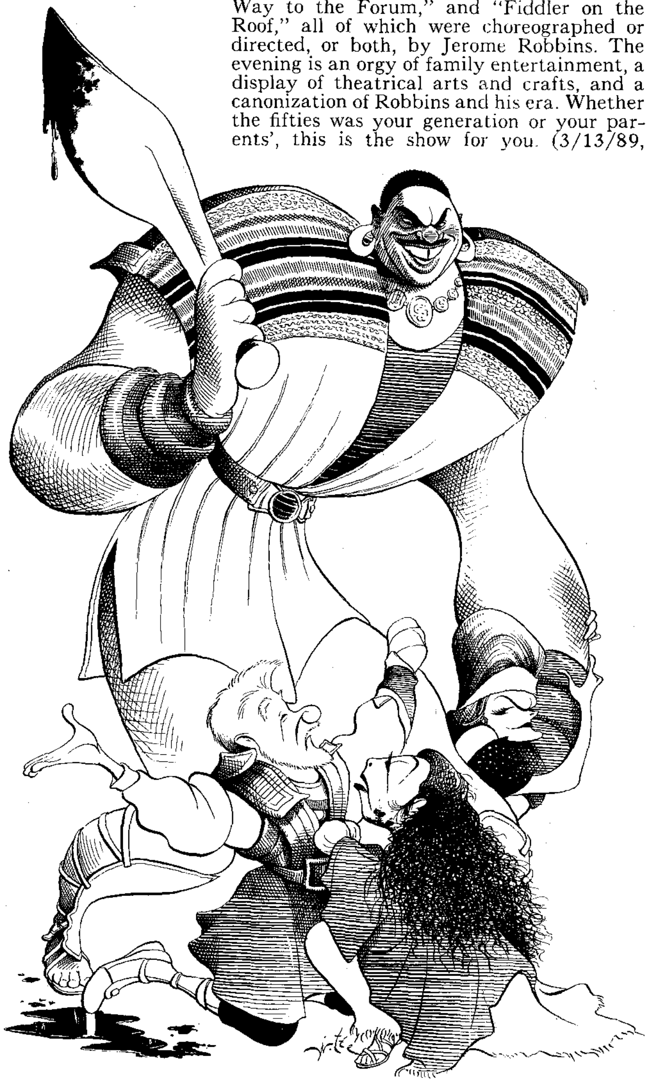
Black and Blue—An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, and a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (2/6/89, under Dancing.) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.)

Festival Latino in New York—Final performances of the *celebración*. In Spanish, with simultaneous translation available on selected dates. "A Midsummer Night's Dream," adapted by Manuel Rueda. Presented by the Dominican Republic's Theatre of Fine Arts, Aug. 14-15. . . . ¶ Colombia's La Candelaria Company in "El Paso, or Parable of the Path," Aug. 16-20. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.) . . . **Note:** There will also be related film programs at the Biograph Cinema (through Aug. 19). The festival concludes with a free concert at the Delacorte Theatre in Central Park, on Aug. 21 at 8. Dizzy Gillespie, Gonzalo Rubalcaba & Grupo Proyecto, and Roy Brown will provide the music.

The Heidi Chronicles—Wendy Wasserstein's play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With a superb cast, including Joan Allen, Boyd Gaines, Peter Friedman, Drew McVety, and Joanne Camp. (12/26/88) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

A Hot Minute—A musical revue, conceived by Melanie Mintz, about backup singers and their aspirations toward the big time. With Vivian Cherry, Pattie Darcy, Jon Fiore, Annie Golden, and John-Martin Green. The show runs two nights a week, on Wednesdays and Thursdays, at 8 and 11, through Aug. 24. (Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. 228-6300.)

Jerome Robbins' Broadway—A collection of high spots from "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," "The King and I," "Peter Pan," "West Side Story," "Gypsy," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which were choreographed or directed, or both, by Jerome Robbins. The evening is an orgy of family entertainment, a display of theatrical arts and crafts, and a canonization of Robbins and his era. Whether the fifties was your generation or your parents', this is the show for you. (3/13/89, under Dancing.) (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)



"Titus Andronicus"

The Kathy and Mo Show: Parallel Lives—This production consists of comedy skits and vignettes about gender and its role in society. It is written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

The Lady in Question—Charles Busch's new play, set in Germany during the Second World War, is the perfect entertainment for a hot summer night. It's less pointedly a parody of one genre or movie than his last work, "Psycho Beach Party," was, and more a travesty of an entire week's worth of TNT programming, compressed into a single evening of theatre. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

Largely New York—It would be a mistake to assume that Bill Irwin's dance-mime extravaganza is fundamentally boring because it lacks words; in fact, it has the best "book" on

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THE THEATRE—Cont'd

Broadway. The piece is partly a sendup of theatrical technology, partly a comment on the ills that beset a pluralistic society, and partly a debate about art. Irwin puts onstage all the conflicts, tensions, and antagonisms of modern city life and resolves them by means of an invented language. His solution is unrealistic—it obtains only in a theatre—but what makes the message so uplifting is that to understand it you have to learn a new idiom. (5/15/89) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

Lend Me a Tenor—The setting of this farce by Ken Ludwig is a hotel suite in Cleveland in 1934, where a famous tenor who is booked to sing "Otello" takes an overdose of barbiturates. A substitute must be found. Under Jerry Zaks' direction, all the surprises up the dramatist's sleeve are brought to comic life. Philip Bosco, Victor Garber, Tovah Feldshuh, J. Smith-Cameron, Caroline Lagerfelt, Ron Holgate, Jane Connell, and Jeff Brooks make up the splendid cast. (3/13/89) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Light Opera of Manhattan—Presenting Gilbert and Sullivan's **pirates of penzance.** (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

Love Letters—Staged readings of A. R. Gurney's two-character play. Aug. 14, Pamela Reed and William Hurt, and Aug. 22-27 Stockard Channing and John Rubinstein. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Mandy Patinkin in Concert: Dress Casual—So called, presumably, because the *chanteur* gets to wear sneaks and a T-shirt—a costume that pretty much sets the tone for an evening of glorious song and good fun. Patinkin here tends to sing only what is either very, very simple (and old) or very, very complicated (and Sondheim). Half the show's pleasure derives from Patinkin's between-song (in some cases even mid-song) patter and the relationship that develops between him and his able pianist, Paul Ford. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

TIME'S UP

At the top of the Shearson Lehman Hutton Plaza, now nearing completion in Tribeca, there is an illuminated clock. The building itself is a Kohn Pedersen Fox skyscraper in the retro mode—polished granite cladding, a garden set with neoclassical obelisks, and the clock decorating a semiclassical temple. The clock is square, with fussy lines radiating from the center. It looks a bit like something that might have been presented to an employee earlier in the century as a reward for fifty years of devoted service. Come to think of it, the clock would make a swell retirement gift for postmodernism, a style that never seems to know what time it is.

Only Kidding!—Jim Geoghan's comedy about standup comedians, in all their panic and desperation, has the ring of authenticity, and jokes that invariably pay off. (One monologue, about a Greek restaurant, is a knockout.) (5/29/89) (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.)

Other People's Money—Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York stockbroker's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. Kevin Conway can seldom have been better or funnier than he is as Bronx-born Lawrence Garfinkle. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

Shenandoah—John Cullum reprises his original role in a revival of the 1975 musical, which was based on James Lee Barrett's 1965 film of the same name. Score by Gary Geld, lyrics by Peter Udell, and book by Mr. Barrett, Philip Rose (who once again directs), and Mr. Udell. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102. Closes Sept. 2.)

Shirley Valentine—Willy Russell's play about a Liverpool housewife who, feeling herself engulfed by drab domesticity, flies off to Greece, where she finds a temporary lover and lives happily ever after. With Ellen Burstyn in the title, and only, role. Directed by Simon Callow. (2/27/89) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Showing Off—As comedy revues go, this one—written by Douglas Bernstein and Denis Markell—isn't at all bad. The winning performances by Mr. Bernstein, Marilyn Pasekoff, Mark Sawyer, and Veanne Cox often make the material seem better than it is, but ultimately they don't compensate for the over-all smugness of what is essentially life-style comedy. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.)

LONG RUNS

anything goes: This exuberant revival is primarily a celebration of Cole Porter himself. The company, which includes Leslie Uggams, Bill McCutcheon, and Gregg Edelman, does more than justice to the words and score. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes Sept. 3.) . . . **cats:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **a chorus line:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **the cocktail hour:** A dramatist returns home to break the news to his prosperous family that he has written a play about them and to ask their permission to have it produced. More easily said than done. A. R. Gurney's humor has never been more sparkling, his characters never more engaging. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313. Closes Aug. 20.) . . . **driving miss daisy:** Frances Sternhagen and Earle Hyman star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.) . . . **the fantasticks:** The longest-running long run recently turned twenty-nine. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **forbidden broadway 1989:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. The performers are Toni DiBuono, Dorothy Kiara, David B. McDonald, and Michael McGrath. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **i could go on lip-synching!:** This one-man variety show made up of cultural arcana is kind of weird, kind of quirky, and kind of brilliant. Performed by John Epperson and written by him and Justin Ross (who directed), it uses the rhetorical tactics of drag theatre to attack some of the Big Questions, managing not so much to raise lip-synching to an art as to transform aural montage into psychodrama. (Theatre Off Park, 224 Waverly Pl., at 11th St. 627-2556.) . . . **into the woods:** This musical by Stephen Sondheim and James Lapine is an attempt to show what lurks beneath the surface of conventional fairy tales. The songs are beautiful or funny—sometimes both. Directed by Mr. Lapine. The cast includes Ellen Foley and Chip Zien. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-6363. Closes Sept. 3.) . . . **m. butterfly:** David Henry Hwang's funny, mysterious, and often beautiful play, with John Rubinstein and B. D. Wong. Starting Aug. 21, Tony Randall replaces Mr. Rubinstein. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.) . . . **me and my girl:** An infelicitously rehabilitated British musical out of the thirties. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **les misérables:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **nunsense:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **the phantom of the opera:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **rumors:** This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has written. It is acted to perfection by Ron Leibman, Joyce Van Patten, Charles Brown, and Cynthia Darlow, under the impeccable direction of Gene Saks. (Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **steel magnolias:** This first play by Robert Harling is set in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wise-cracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 246-0102.)

DANCE

One can see the last hundred years of Western art halved—through the nineteen-forties, coherence in the image; afterward, coherence in the observer—in an unpretentious and suggestive exhibition called "Painters for the Theatre," on the third floor of the Museum of Modern Art, through October 17. The show, of actual theatrical designs (many of them for dance) as well as of pictures that take the performing arts as their subject, doesn't try for historical completeness or polemics; its goal is to give a sampling of the holdings in MOMA's Theatre Arts Collection. But chronology is destiny here. We find examples of all the famous pre-Second World War aesthetics—from Spain, France, Mexico, Germany. As varied as these ideas and styles are, the work proves authoritative; the artist is always in control. The Russians seem especially good at ballet fantasy: in a suite of gouache and watercolor designs for Massine's "Aleko," Chagall invokes a primal world of musky sensation through color; in designs from the thirties and forties for Balanchine ballets, Tchelitchew transforms human bodies into tragic heroes through line. The section of more recent work has highlights—the paper collage of a beach ballet by Alex Katz ("Water Music") grows more dramatic the longer one studies it—but they're solitary torches in a pea-soup fog.

The high quality of the early work may reflect the taste of the collection's founder, Lincoln Kirstein. In 1939, he established a Dance Archive at MOMA, the basis for the Theatre Arts Collection. In 1949, the bulk of the expanded archive was transferred to the Harvard Theatre Collection and to what is now the Dance Collection of the New York Public Library, at Lincoln Center. MOMA kept about four hundred drawings, watercolors, and gouaches by avant-garde artists. To judge from the selections here, these works were the collection's precious core.

IN TOWN

Tamagawa Gakuen Dance & Drama Group—Forty-five members of a Tokyo university company, presenting traditional dances. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. Aug. 17-19 at 8, and Aug. 20 at 3 and 7:30.)

OUT OF TOWN

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival—Aug. 15-19: The Hubbard Street Dance Company. . . . ¶ Starting Aug. 22: Garth Fagan Bucket Dance. (Becket, Mass. 1-413 243-0745.)

Saratoga Performing Arts Center—Aug. 17-20: Susan Marshall & Company in "Arms," "The Aerialist," "Companion Pieces," "Trio in Four Parts," and other works. (Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 1-518 587-3330.)

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NIGHT LIFE

WHEN Art Farmer was first learning to play the trumpet, all that the woman in charge of music at his segregated high school in Phoenix could think to tell him was "You play more wrong notes than anyone I ever heard." Farmer has long since moved his base to Vienna and, in a rather unorthodox career move, turned exclusively to the flugelhorn. On August 22, in one of his infrequent swings through this city, he will join the guitarist Kenny Burrell for a six-night stint at Sweet Basil. The music teacher may have been stumped by his playing, but jazz critics—struck by the richness of his sound—have been writing prose poems about him for more than thirty years. His style has been called lucent, jaunty, eloquent, spare, dry-eyed, misty, amiable, grainy, and imperturbable; and Farmer himself has been nominated as the "creator of the warmest flugelhorn sound on earth."

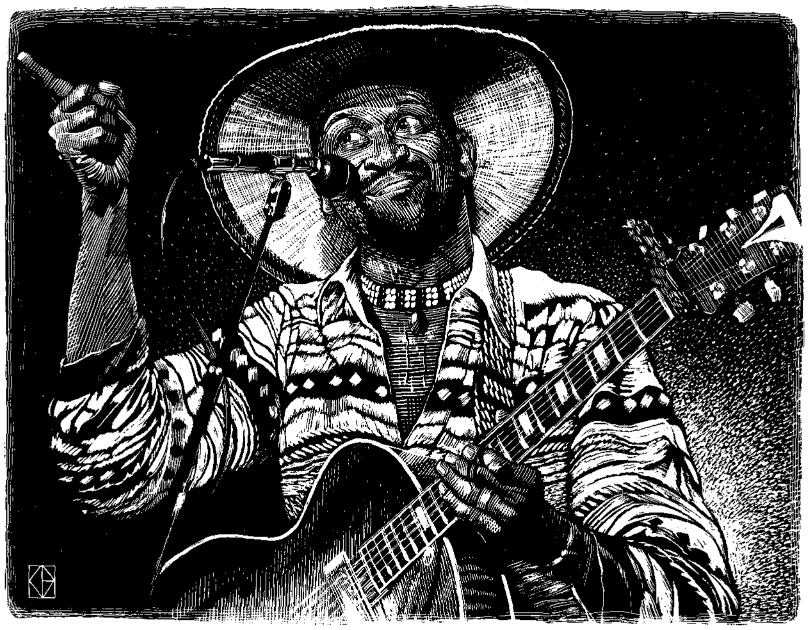
Early in his career, Kenny Burrell was regarded chiefly as the standard-bearer for the tradition of Charlie Christian, whose style was a precursor of bebop. Since then, Burrell has been astonishingly prolific: he has played his lyrical blues-tinged guitar lines on more than two hundred albums—including such standouts as "Guitar Forms" (with arrangements by Gil Evans) and the two-record tribute "Ellington Is Forever." Farmer and Burrell's last three performances at Sweet Basil (August 25-27) will be part of the Hennessy Village Jazz Festival, which runs through September 4. (The pair will also give a free concert at the Village Gate, on August 25 at 4:30.) The festival this year celebrates sixty years of jazz in Greenwich Village, beginning with, say, the Village Barn, the Nut Club, and Nick's. An equally good cause for celebration, though, is the festival's half-price admission to several of the fine, and still humming, jazz rooms downtown. Festival passes may be purchased at Sweet Basil or the Village Gate.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which bold-face type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A big, soigné cabaret on the edge of Chelsea, in the heart of the fur and fashion-student districts. **BLOSSOM DEARIE** returns to this room Aug. 15-19, with her small, delicate, diction-perfect voice. She's followed by singer and Broadway habitué Christine Andreas, who gets started on Aug. 22.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A jazz club that'd be a perfect stop on a bus tour (there's even a souvenir shop that sells Kodak). It's a good idea to make a reservation and show up *well* in advance. **RAY CHARLES,** who was born Ray Charles Robinson but dropped the surname for fear he'd be confused with Sugar Ray, will be here Aug. 15-20. His entourage: the Raelettes & the Ray Charles orchestra. Beginning Aug. 22, pianist **MICHEL CAMILO'S** trio will perform, along with singer-guitarist **JON LUCIEN.** First set at nine. Dining.

BOTTOM LINE, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. The walls and columns are basic black with some rainbow detailing here and there—the place looks a little like the outside of a van. If you end up without a seat, you can stand at the bar—finally a club where they don't force you to drink—and mull over photographs from great shows you've missed. Mike's Talent Show takes place on Aug. 15, featuring, among other things, readings by Ian Frazier. Veteran blues and jazz singer **TAJ MAHAL** performs on Aug. 19, and Aug. 22 belongs to **FLORA PURIM** and **AIRTO.** Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.



Taj Mahal at the Bottom Line

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar, tucked between a D'Agostino supermarket and a greengrocery. In 1969, when Bradley Cunningham and a partner bought it, it was called the Stirrup. Its light is distinctive, something between dim generic tavern light and refined haze; its patrons are famously gabby; its piano, which Paul Desmond bequeathed to Mr. Cunningham, has been played by many first-rate musicians, including Jimmy Rowles, Tommy Flanagan, and Dave McKenna. Aug. 14-16, pianist **PETE MALINVERNI** and bassist **RAY DRUMMOND** will have their run of the place; Aug. 17-19, they'll take up with tenor-sax man **RALPH LALAMA.** Aug. 20 is the property of **DAN WALL** (piano), **SANTI DEBRIANO** (bass), and **DAVID EARLE JOHNSON** (drums); and beginning Aug. 21 pianist **KIRK LIGHTSEY** brings in a trio. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CARLOS I, 432 Sixth Ave., at 10th St. (982-3260)—The "great savory *pot au feu* called New York" (in the words of the great romantic Duke Ellington) has loads of West Indian restaurants, but not too many that feature name-brand jazz bands. Jazz violinist **BILLY BANG** heats it up from Aug. 15 to Aug. 20. **OLIVER LAKE,** a founding member of the World Saxophone Quartet, goes to work with his latest foursome beginning Aug. 22. Music from nine-thirty.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—In the late seventies and early eighties, this dark cave (graffitied walls, a battered pool table, rest rooms for the intrepid only) was the hub of a thriving punk-music scene—Blondie, Talking Heads, the Ramones, and Television were regular attractions. Local rock has since diminished, but while other clubs of the era (notably Max's Kansas City) have fizzled, CB's perseveres, and young hopefuls continue to fill the stage nightly. Music from nine-thirty Sundays through Thursdays, and from ten-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

DAN LYNCH, 221 Second Ave., at 14th St. (677-0911)—Outside Dan Lynch, you'll come across a lot of suspicious characters who'll claim to know you; inside you'll find a pupil-dilating, brown-on-brown bar decorated with an Aretha poster and remnants of a birch tree. The place brightens up considerably at ten with a variety of live blues, including vamps of the "put on your red dress" variety.

DELTA 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—A long, rambling bar and restaurant with a white-trash-chicken-shack theme. The decorator went kind of hog-wild with all the old filling-station and soft-drink signs and the hubcaps and the dime-store portrait of the King and the display of dozer caps and the shingle from the taxidermist in Spanish Fort, Alabama—but it's a friendly enough place. The New Voices of Freedom, the gospel choir that livened up the recent U2 movie, come in on Aug. 14; the zydeco outfit **LOUP GAROU,** one of this establishment's fine in-house bands, will perform Aug. 17. Shows after nine. Chicken-fried steak, deep-fried crawdads (a.k.a. Cajun popcorn), and other exotic Southern fare.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—There's not a lot of elbow- or head-room in this downstairs jazz club, but the musicians sometimes make you forget all about it. Trombonist **AL GREY,** a longtime Basie-band star, swings into action Aug. 15-20; **GEORGE COLEMAN,** a peppery saxophonist rooted in Memphis blues (he played on early B. B. King albums), starts a six-night stand on Aug. 22. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

FORTUNE GARDEN PAVILION, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—A satisfying combination of Chinese food and homegrown music. Rubberneckers may see the moon wheeling by the greenhouse roof on its regular tour of romantic Manhattan. The pianists who pass through this room are among Gotham's finest. **DAVE MC KENNA** goes to the bench Aug. 15-20; **JANE HARVEY** will sing on Aug. 21, with the able assistance of bassist **JAY LEONHART** and pianist **BILL MAYS.** Music from eight Mondays through Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—An Old New York kind of place, with dark-wood panelling, white tablecloths, and brass-figurine lamps. The musicians gather around the Steinway that sits in the dining room, next to a brass-railed partition, but chin music is often the dominant sound. The piano-bass team of **RUSS KASSOFF** and **LINC MILLIMAN** will be here Aug. 15-19; **JOHN BUNCH** and John Goldsby start up on Aug. 22. Music from nine-thirty.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Situated in a neighborhood that boasts the Puck Building to the west and a host of windshield washers to the east, this modest space provides a forum for freethinking musicians—for those intent upon widening the parameters of jazz, rock, and pop. Beat and melody are optional, "music" and "noise" relative terms. A pile of soiled, miniaturized sweaters on a shelf hugging the stairway to the second floor are the only artifacts from the building's former incarnation. **TAV FALCO & PANTHER BURNS,** a gritty Memphis band specializing in rockabilly, blues, and spirited stomps, appear on Aug. 19 (with the Hellcats). Their shows have a garage-rock ethos—loose, funny, and long on guitar noise. Other notables: drummer **GERRY HEMINGWAY'S** group on Aug. 15, with Chris Cochrane; **JOHN ZORN, ELLIOTT SHARP,** and Ted Epstein on Aug. 17, with saxophonist **NED ROTHENBERG'S** outfit; Rage to Live on Aug. 21; and on Aug. 22, When People Were Shorter and Lived by the Water. Music after nine.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—The façade is a Silver Eagle bus, the kind your itinerant musician tools around in. The inside features some stuff you probably wouldn't find in a roadhouse—like a wallful of de-luxe Gibson guitars—and some you would: beer, neon beer signs, and men wearing dozer caps. The **HEADLESS HORSEMEN,** four fun-loving sixties archivists who do knockout versions of the Kinks and the Flamin' Groovies, as well as their own songs, step in on Aug. 15. The rest of the schedule: Asleep at the Wheel on Aug. 17; the **FLESHTONES** on Aug. 18; the **WORLD SAXOPHONE QUARTET** on Aug. 20; and **RUTH BROWN** on Aug. 21. Music after nine. Dining.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—A midtown restaurant and jazz lair for the tasselled-loafers set. The dark, sombre bar (carved-wood lions, iron grillwork) looks like a place you'd find in London's financial district; the dining room—putting-green carpet, lime-green leather banquettes, panelled ceiling—has more of a country-club feel. **HADDA BROOKS,** a singer who first made her mark in the forties, finishes up her run here on Aug. 19. **FRANK GORSHIN**—he played the Riddler on the "Batman" TV series—starts a three-week run on Aug. 22. He has given up brainteasers in favor of impressions—including one of Jack Nicholson. Closed Sundays.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—A new, glossy, multilevel maroon-and-silver cabaret, seating about ninety, and located on the north side of the sixty-fifth floor in what used to be the cocktail lounge. The performers, working in a shallow well in the center of the room, do unwitting battle with the bejewelled backdrop of Central Park, Lenox Avenue, the G. W. Bridge, and points north. Singer **PHYLLIS NEWMAN,** who won a Tony in "Subways Are for Sleeping" by threatening to drop her towel and scream whenever her landlord came looking for the rent, will start up on Aug. 15. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

RITZ, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This rock establishment, which recently moved from the East Village to the former temple of excess Studio 54, is still a place where the customer is not always right. The signature feature of its previous address, the giant Big Brother video screen, has been preserved intact. Upstairs in the balcony, there are designated seating areas for industry and non-industry people. Singer **PHOEBE SNOW,** whose recent album, "Something Real," is her first since 1981, headlines on Aug. 17. She's followed by the **RADIATORS** on Aug. 18 and the **GODFATHERS** on Aug. 19. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

SPO-DEE-O-DEE, 565 W. 23rd St., at Eleventh Ave. (206-1990)—A curious mixture of swank and down-home. (The name comes from the 1949 Stick McGhee song "Drinkin' Wine Spo-dee-o-dee," a piece of rowdiness that was Atlantic Records' first hit.) The food is barbecue, the music is mainly rhythm and blues, the chandeliers are big, and the sofas are king-size. The New York City Swing Band leads the proceedings every Monday night, and every Wednesday is Calypso Night, with the Jimmy Niles Steel Drum Band. Shows tend to start around eleven.

SWEET BASIL, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Guitarist **KENNY BURRELL**—who has gone toe-to-toe with Dizzy Gillespie, John Coltrane, and Coleman Hawkins, to name a very few—joins flugelhornist **ART FARMER** in this Village temple of jazz (pressed-tin ceiling, grainy b. & w. photos of your favorite demigods, knee-to-knee seating) for a gig beginning Aug. 22. The electrified big band that the late Gil Evans brought here on Mondays—it shimmered a little and rumbled a lot, while Evans, a hands-off conductor, let his soloists blow at length—is now under the direction of his son, trumpeter Miles Evans, and is in action on Mondays. Shows from ten. Dining.

VILLAGE GATE, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the gym-size downstairs room—which, with its black walls, black pillars, and black pipes and ducts, resembles a live-in Louise Nevelson sculpture—salsa bands pack them in on Mondays. **RAY BARRETTO, PONCHO SANCHEZ,** and **CARLOS (PATATO) VALDEZ** team up on Aug. 21 for "A Night of Skins." **SID CAESAR** continues his engagement Wednesdays through Fridays at eight, Saturdays at seven, and Sundays at three and seven. . . . ¶ One flight up, in the airy space known as the Terrace Bar, **JUNIOR MANCE** presides at the piano every night but Monday, starting at ten.

VILLAGE VANGUARD, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—People from all over the world descend the stairs to this ancient jazz club; many of them later emerge from it in an excited condition. A quartet belonging to Geoff Keezer performs Aug. 15-20; **BOB MINTZER'S** big band (with trumpeter **RANDY BRECKER**) gets under way on Aug. 22. Mondays are prime time for **MEL LEWIS'S** big band. Music from ten.

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Two floors of no-nuke-veggie entertainment and consciousness-raising. Listen to bands play in the Summer of Love-muralled back room; buy a tie-dyed T-shirt at the Volkswagen-bus curio shop; catch up on current events at the bulletin board and community calendar. Or, if you'd rather just be mellow, crash out in the basement hippie love pad. Wetlands is celebrating the twentieth anniversary of Woodstock with a lineup of bands (or what's left of them) that were there: **COUNTRY JOE MCDONALD** on Aug. 16; **CANNED HEAT** on Aug. 17; and **BIG BROTHER & THE HOLDING COMPANY** Aug. 18-19.

ZINNO, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—If you like pictures of cows, there's a good one here, by the British painter Malcolm Morley, of some Holsteins adrift in a Turneresque landscape. There's also jazz, which flows peaceably from a passageway between the front-room bar and the back-room restaurant. The piano-bass teams: **RONNIE MATHEWS** and **DAVID WILLIAMS** through Aug. 19; **JAMES WILLIAMS** and **BOB CRANSHAW** starting Aug. 21. Music weeknights from eight. Closed Sundays.

FACES

Fleer's gum was just plain awful, which was one reason why many of us collected Topps cards instead. Reminders of those days can be found at the Hunter College Sportsplex (Lexington Avenue and 68th Street), where original artwork from the Topps archives—spanning more than thirty years and including baseball cards, Bazooka Joe comics, rub-on tattoos, etc.—will be displayed August 17-18. Where else can you see three-and-a-half-by-five-inch paintings of, for instance, Bob Feller, Willie Mays, and Whitey Ford, all of them fresh-faced and posing for their 1953 cards? Collectors more interested in the flip side will find pen-and-ink drawings used to illustrate the trivia questions ("Which Browns outfielder in 1945 had only one arm?") that appeared alongside all those beloved stats. For anyone nostalgic for the past two decades, there will even be Wacky Pack art. Those stickers—remnants of which are still stuck on bedroom doors all over America—were Mad*-magazine-style sendups of household names. The five-by-seven-inch paintings here will include "Rabid Shave," "Hawaiian Punks," and the perennial movie-house treat "Reaganets" ("approved as a vegetable for the U.S. school lunch program"). Guernsey's Auction House will put everything on the block August 19-20 at the Sportsplex—remember when you did all the swapping yourself?*

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

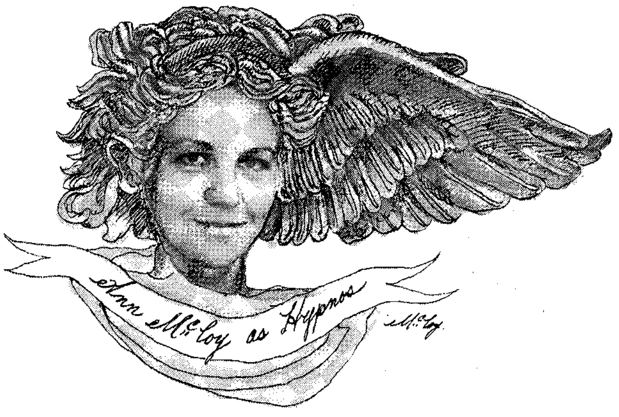
CARMELITA'S, on East Fourteenth Street, is usually a catering hall. (The sandwich board outside reads "The Best Wedding Come from Carmelita's.") The décor at Carmelita's is best described as an *Enquirer* headline—"OBSESSED FAN CREATES FANTASY LOVE NEST FOR HIMSELF AND CHARO." The stucco on the ceiling could spike beer cans, and the raspberry-colored curtains are of the fabric that makes bridesmaids weep when they discover what their best friend has selected for them to wear.

On Monday nights, however, Carmelita's turns into a club. In fact, it is just about the only option on Mondays for anyone who likes T-shirts and big hoop earrings, or those tortured mini-ponytails composed of fifty short neck-hairs screaming to get out of a rubber band. Carmelita's is not cool. It's not the seeming lack of air-conditioning, or the ceiling fans that are so low they could turn an exuberant dancer's arm into Oscar Mayer luncheon meat, or even the crowd that can't dance. For in New York neither temperature nor setting nor costumes is what makes places cool. Traffic flow does. Veteran New York night crawlers practice a system of ease and slide—a hand gently pressed on a blocking person's back as one slips through the narrow void created. This set of moves allows for people to pass through crowds with Graham-like grace. But at Carmelita's, bodies move like Ramblers at a demolition derby. They walk by bashing, meet by crashing, make room by mashing. This is not cool club behavior in this burg. The reason why Carmelita's is not cool is not that it's on the wrong night. It's that it's in the wrong city. It needs to be someplace where collision is a way of life, not just a condition of the road. In Los Angeles, finessing a crowd is as uncommon as a license plate without a slogan. And it's not as if the town has a quota on raspberry sateen.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

P.S. 122—Aug. 17-20 at 9:30: Penny Arcade impersonates New York bag people, society matrons, downtown hipsters, etc. . . . ¶ Aug. 17-20 at 9:30: The Ridge Theatre in "The End of Business as Usual," a play about media consultants who are kidnapped by crack dealers. Through Aug. 27. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



Self-portrait by Ann McCoy

ART

THE East End of Long Island is plenty scenic, and it has attracted artists for about a century as a resort, yet we do not have the great evocations of it that painters have dispatched from Brittany, Provence, Tuscany, the Suffolk Downs, Yellowstone, and the Adirondacks. The Hamptons got their picture taken—or taken away—by late-modernist abstraction. Legendary residents such as the Pollocks and the de Koonings never seriously considered a little sketching outing to Hither Hills, and even a representational artist such as Fairfield Porter gave us domestic and interior portraits, along with scenes of modern East Hampton's literary history and social psychology—not dunes.

Today, with the subject of landscape painting on everyone's mind, and with more artists than ever out in the Hamptons, you might think things were changing—that we were on the way to getting our Mont Sainte-Victoire of the South Fork. An exhibition at Southampton's Parrish Art Museum called "Painting Horizons: Jane Freilicher, Albert York, April Gornik" (through September 17) suggests that we are not. All these artists paint landscapes, and each maintains a studio in the area, but the similarities stop there. Freilicher is closest to the plein-air tradition—typically, she paints views from the window or porch of her house. Her paintings might be the sportive, plainspoken American descendants of Bonnard's. Gornik is the youngest here, and her meticulously rendered paintings—American Luminist panoramas that look as if they have been vacuumed and freeze-dried—helped stimulate a lot of current fashionable thinking about nature and the nineteenth-century Romantic Sublime. York, the mysterious loner in this group, is the quirkiest and most seductive. His small halftone works, with their thumb-size daubs, suggest a magical crossbreeding of Albert Pinkham Ryder, Louis Eilshemius, Manet, and Gauguin. York's "Carnations in a Blue Can with a Beetle," in which cut flowers resemble paintbrushes and occupy the landscape like monumental statuary, both steals and allegorizes the show.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—A lovely display of Chinese landscape paintings from the Ming (1368-1644) and Ch'ing (1644-1911) dynasties. The exhibition indicates that the concept of "selling out" is hardly unique to the Warhol era: the Ming paintings contrast professional court painters, who were realistic and monumental, with amateur scholar-painters, who valued experimentation, the development of personalized style, and detachment from the worldly demands of officialdom. The show also demonstrates that abstraction is not a Western invention: the Ch'ing paintings display a high degree of it, with their flattened compositions and exploitation of the "cinematic" panning inherent in the form of the scroll. Some of the Ch'ing ink-dot landscapes are positively Pollock. Through Aug. 27. . . . ¶ "Apropos Aprons," a presentation of the Costume Institute, considers not the workaday item but apron extremes—extremely ornate examples from eighteenth-century Europe, and the extremely short Rudi Gernreich mini (1967), not to mention the Egyptian noblewoman's funerary apron, and various loincloths, girdles, pinafores, and pendant sashes. Through Sept. 3. . . . ¶ An exhibition comparing photographs of the sixties with photographs of the eighties, including works by Duane Michals, Cindy Sherman, and the Starn Twins. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Tuesday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—The museum's recently acquired van Gogh, "Portrait of Joseph Roulin" (1889), is on view in the second-floor galleries. . . . ¶ Twenty-five sculptures and fifteen drawings by Christopher Wilmarth (1943-87). A compact and exceptionally discomfiting retrospective. The artist's green-glass structures from the late sixties and seventies are elegant but utterly mute. The late work—mostly bronze wall reliefs with ovoid etched-glass "heads"—offers about as despairing a vision of the self as you are likely to find. Through Aug. 20. (A complementary show is at Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.) . . . ¶ A Helen Frankenthaler retrospective, ranging from the artist's stained, vaguely Orientalist fifties paintings through her mid-sixties color-field work to some exquisite abstracts of this decade, such as "Casanova" and "Scarlatti." Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ "California Photography: Remaking Make-Believe." Forty-five recent works by John Baldessari, Nancy Barton, Jo Ann Callis, John Divola, Robert Heinecken, Larry Johnson, and Larry Sultan. All of the artists reside in California. Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ Photographs by Aaron Siskind from the permanent collection. . . . **NOTE:** The museum's sculpture garden, at 14 W. 54th St., is open, free, on Fridays and Saturdays from 6 to 10, with musicians from the Juilliard School performing at 7:30. (The museum is open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The current installation from the permanent collection emphasizes the museum's superb, specialized holdings in nonobjective European art, beginning with a detailed display of the fracturing of pictorial space that formed one of the major currents of early-twentieth-century painting: Cézanne, Cubism, Italian and Russian Futurism, and De Stijl. There's also in-depth attention paid to Kandinsky, Klee, and Brancusi, a trio whose works form the fulcrum of the collection. On the museum's top spiral, a display of sculptures primarily by European artists attempts to impose direction on the Guggenheim's uneven contemporary collection. . . . ¶ Also on display from the museum's permanent collection is an enormous circle of red-slate fragments, assembled by the peripatetic English artist Richard Long—a poetic sort of walker. Long, who has a way of making atavistic practices speak to us in sophisticated terms, recently installed four other pieces—including two with text, and another with his handprints. Through Sept. 3. (Open Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A show of oils, watercolors, prints, and drawings by Edward Hopper. The hundred and fifty works span the artist's career, and are drawn from the museum's collection. . . . ¶ "Art in Place" is a thematically arranged show of three hundred works that have entered the permanent collection over the past fifteen years. They range from a 1901 watercolor by Maurice Prendergast to a 1988 aluminum sculpture by John Newman. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM DOWNTOWN, 33 Maiden Lane—"The Desire of the Museum": This provocative show, organized by student curators, presents the institution of "the museum" as a living entity, with its own set of desires and unspoken agendas. It does not include some of the better-known artistic examinations of the museum frame, by such artists as Claes Oldenburg, Marcel Broodthaers, and Michael Asher. It does feature a Marcel Duchamp piece, which contains reproductions of the master gamesman's ready-mades; Richard Artschwager's hairy rubber blips, which are strategically installed in unexpected locations; Hans Haacke's portrait of the extra-aesthetic life of Seurat's "Les Poseuses"; and Mark Dion and Jason Simon's tales of pictures that were badly damaged or painted and then economically revitalized through conservationist cunning. The curators try to push their point too far with gimmicky interventions (including die-cut questions beside the art works, such as "What does the museum want?"), but this show—which also includes Guerrilla Girls' posters, Allan McCollum's painted surrogates, Louise Lawler's photo wall labels, and more—is long overdue. Through Sept. 12. (Open Mondays through Fridays, 11 to 6.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—"Andrew Wyeth: The Helga Pictures." Through Sept. 18. . . . ¶ "Hispanic Art in the United States: Thirty Contemporary Painters & Sculptors." . . . Concurrent with the Hispanic show is a forceful lobby installation by Alfredo Jaar, a Chilean artist living in New York. It consists of light boxes that look like black beams edged in photographic transparencies of United States civil-rights protesters, including picketers carrying signs that read "I *AM* A MAN" and a young black man with part of his face done up in white makeup. The artfully haphazard arrangement of beams argues effectively for anti-authoritarianism in both life and art. Through Sept. 4. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A display of Saudi Arabian dress in which traditional *thawbs*, for instance, are seen alongside a cloak that belonged to King Faisal. (Open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

AMERICAN CRAFT MUSEUM, 40 W. 53rd St.—Fifty-four pieces of furniture produced by master woodworker George Nakashima since 1944: chairs, chaises, desks, tables, picture frames, and table lamps characterized by their simplicity, modernist design, traditional craftsmanship, and sumptuous surfaces. The éclat of Nakashima's work often depends on the play between controlled, rectilinear elements and the baroque naturalism—burls, lacunae, irregular edges—of the wood itself. Through Aug. 20. . . . ¶ "Rain of Talent: Umbrella Art," a mild drizzle of some thirty altered umbrellas suspended from the ceiling of the main stairwell. The talents include Rhonda Zwillinger, Kim MacConnel, Robert Venturi, Betty Woodman, and Rodney Alan Greenblat. Through Sept. 24. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—The most recent installation of works from the exemplary collection of John D. Rockefeller 3rd (the society's initial benefactor) highlights fine Chinese and Japanese porcelains, such as a grouping of small translucent celadon bowls and a large Ming water jar depicting fish swimming among aquatic plants. There are also Hindu and Buddhist sculptures, mostly from India, and particularly enthralling are several Khmer stone statues, with their idealized naturalism, classically smooth surfaces, and utterly placid serenity masking what was a brutal warrior society. . . . ¶ A display of thirty-five Korean porcelains provides a good, if somewhat cursory, introduction to delicate work made during the Chosŏn dynasty (1392-1910). Both shows through Sept. 3. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—Red Grooms. His work is about as close as art gets to real entertainment, and his graphic work—the subject of this exhibition—is no exception. Included are some delightful three-dimensional lithographs that resemble permanently opened pop-up books. Through Sept. 10. (Open weekdays, except Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 11 to 4:30.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"Polished Perfection: The Art of Turned-Wood Bowls." In the nineteen-thirties and forties, almost as an afterthought to the Industrial Revolution, factory mass production displaced the artisan and his lathe in the creation of wood bowls. This show, of eighty works by twenty-one contemporary North American craftsmen (along with four bowls by four unknown Early American settlers), proves that the artisanal tradition has survived. . . . ¶ Drawings and watercolors of Rome, in all its grandeur (and disintegration). The works, which range from the Renaissance to the early Romantic era, are travelling for the first time outside the Vatican Library. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge from 5 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Jewish Museum, Fifth Ave. at 92nd St.—"Exodus and Exile: 2,000 Years in Ancient Israel," an archeological exhibition tracing some of the cultural shifts and political cataclysms between 1200 B.C.E. and 600 C.E. that, bit by bit, transformed the Israelite kingdom into an international religious community—the birth, in short, of Jewish identity in the modern sense. A few objects, such as ancient mosaics and synagogue reliefs, have not been seen in this country before, and while they represent a fragmented and elusive story, the show's attractive, playful installation is informative. (Open Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, noon to 5; Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"Stitched from the Soul: Slave Textiles from the Ante-Bellum South." This fascinating exhibition demonstrates that slaves preserved fragments of their African heritage in their quilts by combining native patterns, colors, and appliqué techniques with requisite Euro-American motifs. This display of quilts is double-edged: the most delicate ones were made by slaves for their mistresses, with whom they were often drawn into close and complicated relationships, while quiltmaking by slaves for their own use formed a center of their social life. Through Sept. 17. (Open daily, 9 to 9.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—An exhibition of botanical illustrations, mostly English and Victorian. Through Sept. 2. (Gottesman Exhibition Hall. Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 6.) . . . ¶ The Berg Collection has mounted a presentation of mostly letters and manuscripts in which poets and novelists from Chaucer to Bellow ruminate on love and death. (Berg Collection Exhibition Room. Open daily, except Thursdays and Sundays, 10 to 6.)

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Road, Long Island City—Noguchi, one of the twentieth century's singular talents, designed this oasis for more than two hundred and fifty of his sculptures. It contains a wide range of his work—from the early surrealistic biomorphic pieces through several types of stone carvings—and documentation of his prodigious public art. The centerpiece of the museum is a peaceful, ivy-walled garden dotted with sculptures. (Open Wednesdays and Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.—This first retrospective of the well-regarded African-American painter Hughie Lee-Smith includes some moving and unusual portraits of isolation, made in the fifties, that call to mind Marsh, Tooker, and the early Guston; and sixties works depicting isolated figures next to metal poles with colored ribbons flapping from them. In the seventies and eighties the subtle surrealist cast fades and a relatively ordinary urban realism remains. . . . ¶ Graphics and installations that incorporate photography, the work of fifteen contemporary artists. Both shows through Sept. 24. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES

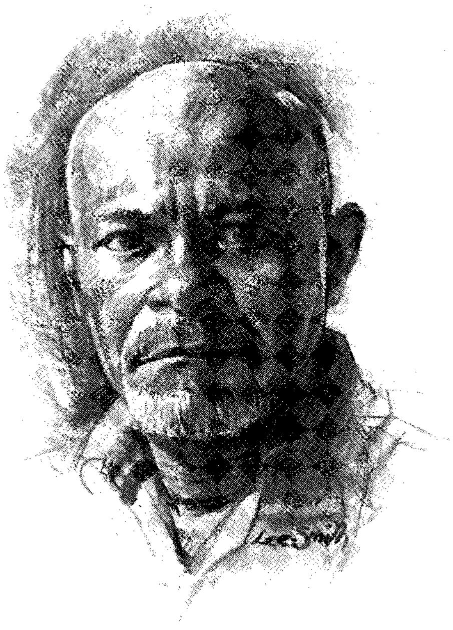
(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Mondays through Fridays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Jene Highstein / Mike Glier—Highstein's art is rooted in the situational sculpture of the early seventies, but here at Wave Hill, in this ideally sited indoor-outdoor display of work from the past five years, the artist's interest in traditional sculpture-making predominates. Large masses of marble have been chiselled, chinked, bored, and pounded, and tree trunks have been stripped, smoothed, and bleached into sturdy abstract forms that suggest toadstools, a beached whale, and Rodin's "Balzac." Sometimes the artist's debt to Noguchi is too strong, but Highstein can also fashion an awkward, chunky shape into a breathing entity that transcends its material. Through Oct. 8. / Glier's drawings, in what was once a formal dining room, establish him as today's great baroque wall decorator. The artist has drawn luscious, moody landscapes—in bravura gray washes that have the brooding mystery of the German Romantics—evoking the postcultural miasma of J. G. Ballard's novels, and infusing the scenes with the artist's own sense of dark peacefulness. Through Dec. 31. (Wave Hill, Independence Ave. at 249th St., the Bronx. Closed Mondays.)

Christopher Wilmarth (1943-87)—This exhibition is a coda to the MOMA retrospective, with an emphasis on drawings rather than sculptures. The early-seventies paper pieces with folds and staples are especially good—sensuous and succinct. The later, figurative works are sometimes powerful but suggest an acrid emotionalism. Through Aug. 20. (Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

"China—June 4, 1989 . . ."—The Asian American Arts Centre has responded to the brutal military force used against protesting students in Tiananmen Square with a video program of television news documentaries in English, Cantonese, and Mandarin; an exhibition of vivid photographs of the student hunger strike and subsequent violence; and an evolving "Artist Wall," a folding screen that is being made from doors and decorated by interested artists. The most compelling work on it thus far looks like a metal prison door with a map of China behind a barred window. Through Sept. 29. (26 Bowery.)

"Literacy on the Table"—An admirably integrated exhibition of primarily multi-media works that address cultural literacy in relation to "otherness." In "See Me Jump," Clarissa T. Sligh rewrites Dick and Jane from a black perspective, and Edgar Heap of Birds, in a series of drawings, emblazons his Native American identity with such words as TRIBE UPON BACK. Through Aug. 26. (Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. Closed Mondays; open Saturdays.)



Self-portrait by Hughie Lee-Smith

Group Shows—At the **forum,** 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.: Contemporary realist paintings are combined with a few gems of early American modernism, particularly by Max Weber, one of the New York Cubists. One of his paintings, "Suspense," depicts Cubistic figures pushed to the front of a dark and ordinary room; they lie about, as if waiting for Godot. Through Aug. 25. . . . **herstand,** 24 W. 57th St.: This hodgepodge of twentieth-century sculptures (with one from the late nineteenth century) seems to lack a historical point. But it does include some stunning bronzes, particularly an animated Rosso bust of a laughing child, a proto-Cubist 1906 Picasso nude, and Brancusi's recumbent head of a sleeping child (1908). The postwar sculptures are not as well selected, but include some wonderfully theatrical bronzes by the contemporary artist Ann McCoy, such as a bed on a winged Etruscoid barge; and a dreamy grouping that includes a classical altar, a strongbox draped with a lily, and some mystical-looking abaci. Through Oct. 14. . . . **knoedler,** 19 E. 70th St.: Suffocating, perfumed elegance by such artists as Motherwell, Stella, Rauschenberg, and Heizer is, sadly, in great abundance here. Through Sept. 11. . . . **marcus,** 578 Broadway: This show of gallery artists displays parallel preferences: a cool and poetic strain of narrative paintings that contain obscured commentaries about modernist image-making, most successfully embodied by the work of Mark Tansey; and a less compelling variety of restrained, handwrought sculptures, most of them with slight sexual allusions—with the exception of the work of Not Vital, a Swiss artist whose sculpture is warm and expansive. Through Aug. 25. . . . **marlborough,** 40 W. 57th St.: A big sampler of mostly gallery artists, many represented by work with a summer theme. Of these, Larry Rivers' two portraits—of a jazz musician naked in his hot hotel room, and of a woman in shorts lolling languorously on a porch—make the best, sultriest point. Through Sept. 16. . . . **pace,** 32 E. 57th St.: "Sculpture by Painters," many of whom are gallery artists, including Condo, de Kooning, Dine, Dubuffet, Johns, Kelly, Lichtenstein, Miró, Morley, Newman, Picasso, Schnabel, Twombly, and Warhol. Condo, who is new to the medium, makes an auspicious début in this handsome exhibition. Through Sept. 1. . . . **galerie st. etienne,** 24 W. 57th St.: A show honoring Otto Kallir, the founder of the Galerie St. Etienne, as much for his pioneering exhibitions of the Austrian Expressionists as for his fascination with the documentation of this century's profound events. In addition to a gorgeous watercolor of a girl by Emil Nolde, an intense self-portrait by the little-known Richard Gerstl (whose work Kallir discovered after the artist committed suicide at age twenty-five), and some fascinating paintings by the composer Arnold Schoenberg, we see Charles Lindbergh's application for an airplane license, Robert E. Peary's telegram confirming the "discovery" of the North Pole, and written recollections of Adolf Hitler, the artist, by Reinhold Hanisch. Hanisch sold Hitler's watercolors in the teens, and in the thirties was Kallir's restorer, prior to the dealer's flight from his native Austria. Through Sept. 8. (Closed Mondays.) . . . **washburn,** 41 E. 57th St.: The fiftieth anniversary of the New York World's Fair is celebrated with a group of American paintings made circa 1939. The show is dominated by geometric and biomorphic abstractions that owe a great deal to Europe. Much of the work is attractive and thoughtful, often dryly so. Included are an interesting David Smith painting and a huge canvas of a W.P.A. mural by Ilya Bolotowsky, which demonstrates Klee-like whimsy on a grand scale. There's also an appealing Alice Trumbull Mason, which has

ART–Cont'd

a little brushy fire that suggests the more assertive America soon to come. Through Aug. 31. . . . **WEBER,** 142 Greene St.: Members of what we are meant to see as two generations of conceptual artists are united in this summer gathering. The oldies take the cake: Sol LeWitt's white box structure (entitled "332 (8 Parts)") from the seventies, Daniel Buren's "A Frame in a Frame in a Frame for a Frame"—a site-specific wall piece of asymmetrically arranged yellow beach-awning stripes against a slate-colored wall—and Hamish Fulton's framed photographs of wildernesses where he walked, are very elegant works, each quite coolly sublime in its way. Works in mixed media by Franz Erhard Walther, Wallace & Donohue, Massimo Antonaci, and Magdalena Jetelová—the younger guard—look pretty good, too, but a little gimmicky and unfocussed by comparison. Also, in the small gallery, there are several beautiful prints by Robert Ryman, theologist of colors white, which date from 1969 to 1975. Through Aug. 25. . . . **YORK,** 21 E. 65th St.: The main room is given over to stiff and provincial American landscape and figurative paintings of the nineteenth century, but the entranceway is devoted to work from the early twentieth century that displays a more engaged idea of culture: an ink sketch of New York by Stuart Davis, a watercolor of a house in the snow by Charles Burchfield, a painting of a lively urban crowd by Guy Pène du Bois, a brooding still-life painting by Marsden Hartley, and an oil-and-sand composition of interlocking trapezoids by Charles Shaw. Through Sept. 1.

PHOTOGRAPHY

"SHADOWS AND SILHOUETTES," the show at the photography gallery on the fourth floor of the Seagram Building, proves to be more than just an occasion to hang some of the photographs from the Seagram Collection. It's an exhibition that focusses on what's going on in the dark. Although shadows can dominate a photograph's mood, they are rarely given the kind of attention that light gets, so it's good to see pictures that are organized around them.

There is very little romance here, and only one image in which people are relaxing in the shade—a modest picture by Marjorie Content, taken in the late twenties, of men sitting and reading on park benches under some old trees. In many of the other photographs, shadow stands for something ominous. There's Lee Friedlander's well-known 1966 shot of a woman walking down the street with a man so close behind her that his shadow projects onto the back of her coat; although in fact the shadow is Friedlander's, it's an image that sends out alarm. The combination of vulnerability and danger that makes this picture memorable is also what stands out in much of the other work here. Sure, there are those classic modernist images in which silhouettes of chimneys or of machinery are meant to represent the beautiful forms of the city. But the photographs with tension are those that use shadow to express anxiety. And none of them were taken in the last two decades. Paul Strand's de Chiricoesque picture of Wall Street is from 1915. Berenice Abbott's nervous photograph of a subway stop is from the thirties. Fritz Henle's image of a policeman on the lookout for crime on Madison Avenue was taken in 1965. Why does everyone keep talking about the good old days?

SIDNEY D. GAMBLE (1890-1968)—A small selection of photographs from the thousands that the artist shot in China between 1917 and 1932. Gamble, also a sociologist, spent many years in China trying to understand it, writing about it, and taking pictures. This exhibition shows an observer who was interested in capturing both tradition and change. Through Sept. 9. (China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.)

INTERNATIONAL CENTER OF PHOTOGRAPHY, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St.—Photographs and a video by six artists—Sophie Calle, Sarah Charlesworth, Donigan Cumming, Dieter Froese, Allan McCollum, and Angela Neuke—who concentrate on contemporary culture via work that explores the impact of the mass media, technology, and photojournalism. Through Sept. 3. (Tuesdays, noon to 8; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

SHORT LIST—**ROBERT SHEEHAN,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway (through Aug. 25); **AARON SISKIND,** Museum of Modern Art (through Oct. 10); **TODD WATTS,** P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway (through Aug. 31; closed Mondays). . . . Group shows: **SHADOWS AND SILHOUETTES,** Seagram Building, fourth floor, 375 Park Ave. (through Aug. 31); **TUTAVOH: LEARNING THE HOPI WAY,** Museum of the American Indian, Broadway at 155th St. (through Jan. 15; open daily except Mondays).

MUSIC

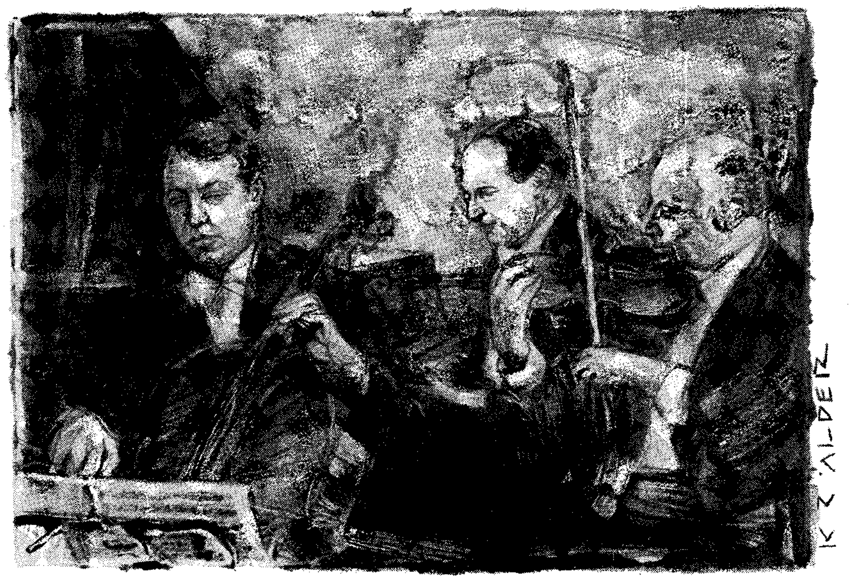
CONSIDERABLE curiosity was aroused when Tanglewood announced its opera-in-concert presentation for 1989: Bizet's "Carmen," with Seiji Ozawa conducting and Jessye Norman in the title part. Carmen is one of the great, charismatic, elusive roles in opera; Ms. Norman is one of the few singers now active whose choice of roles is a matter of interest (she tends to choose idiosyncratically and imaginatively), and the match looks odd at first. Opera singers in the age of cinema are supposed to look their parts: Carmen is supposed to be svelte; Ms. Norman is of ample proportions. She has never sung Carmen on stage, but the concert operas at Tanglewood are often given in a semi-staged form, with lots of action. Did Ms. Norman intend to bid for a return to the days when operagoers—having suspended disbelief sufficiently to accept singing in place of speech—were content also to accept singers' physiques in place of fantasy images?

In the event, curiosity and "Carmen" had to be put off. Ms. Norman and the Boston Symphony, according to its press officers, reached a joint decision that not enough preparation time could be found in their respective schedules. It is unusual, in our time of smoothly whirring artistic machinery, for a big project to lose one of its components—and the Tanglewood "Carmen," like so many live performances, was a spinoff of a big project. Mr. Ozawa, Ms. Norman, and Neil Shicoff (who was to have been the Tanglewood José) have recorded the opera together in Paris, and Philips records is set to release it this month; the Tanglewood performance was to be a sort of coming-out party. As it stands, the festival hopes to reschedule the opera for 1991. The curious can still buy the record, of course, or they can make the trip to Tanglewood on the appointed date (August 19) and get a teaser. Ms. Norman and Mr. Ozawa will perform an all-French program, including Berlioz' cantata on the death of Cleopatra (which we have heard Ms. Norman sing excitingly with the Philadelphia Orchestra), some Offenbach excerpts—and the Habañera from "Carmen."

IN TOWN

NEW YORK CITY OPERA—**ANNA BOLENA,** with Marilyn Mims, Mimi Lerner, Paul Hartfield, and Harry Dworchak; conducted by Scott Bergeson. (Aug. 15 at 8.) . . . **LA BOHÈME,** with Renée Fleming, Gail Dobish, Jon Garrison, Thomas Woodman, Stanley Wexler, and Jan Opalach; Chris Nance. (Aug. 16 and Aug. 22 at 8.) . . . **CARMEN,** with Wendy White, MiHae Park, John Absalom, and Kenneth Shaw; Hal France. (Aug. 17 at 8.) . . . **THE MIKADO,** with Christine Donahue, Muriel Costa-Greenspon, Richard McKee, and Mark Beudert; Peter Howard. (Aug. 18 at 8.) . . . **MADAME BUTTERFLY,** with Louisa Jonason, Jane Shaulis, Stephen O'Mara, and William Parcher; Imre Pallo. (Aug. 19 at 2.) . . . **MEFISTOFELE,** with Frances Ginsberg, John Cheek, and Robert Grayson; Sergiu Comissiona. (Aug. 19 and Aug. 23 at 8.) . . . **DON GIOVANNI,** with Nova Thomas, Margaret Cusack, Kenneth Shaw, and Paul Austin Kelly; Sergiu Comissiona. (Aug. 20 at 1.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

MOSTLY MOZART FESTIVAL—Aug. 14: Trevor Pinnock conducting an all-Vivaldi program. . . . ¶ Aug. 15: The Tokyo String Quartet, with Ralph Kirshbaum, cello, and Jon Kimura Parker, piano. . . . ¶ Aug. 16-17: George Cleve conducting the Mostly Mozart Festival Orchestra, with Joshua Bell,



The Beaux Arts Trio

PIAZZA

New Yorkers have treated the plaza at Lincoln Center as though it were as ravishing as St. Mark's Square. Over the years, we've almost kissed the beast into thinking itself a beauty, particularly on warm summer evenings, when the hulking theatres look like shrines to the idea of open space. At 5:15 on Wednesday, August 16, the plaza will be the site of "The Angle of Ascent," a half-hour collaborative performance by Tamar Rogoff, a choreographer, and Anthony Tsirantonakis, an architect. Rogoff's dancers will climb an eighteen-foot metal-and-wood scaffolding, slide from the summit down into a sandbox, change costume, and begin the climb again. The theme of the piece is "time and renewal."

violin, and Horacio Gutiérrez, piano, in all-Mozart concerts. . . . ¶ Aug. 18-19: George Cleve conducting the festival orchestra, with Emanuel Ax, piano, and Mischa Maisky, cello. . . . ¶ Aug. 21: The Beaux Arts Trio (Isidore Cohen, violin; Peter Wiley, cello; and Menahem Pressler, piano), in a Mozart-Mendelssohn-Schubert program. . . . ¶ Aug. 22-23: Gerard Schwarz conducting the festival orchestra, with Midori, violin; Patricia Schuman, soprano; Frank Lopardo, tenor; and the Mostly Mozart Festival Chorus. The programs are strictly Mozart. (Avery Fisher Hall. 874-2424. Evenings at 8. Through Aug. 26.)

Robert White—Tenor, with Samuel Sanders, piano. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. Aug. 16 at 5:45.)

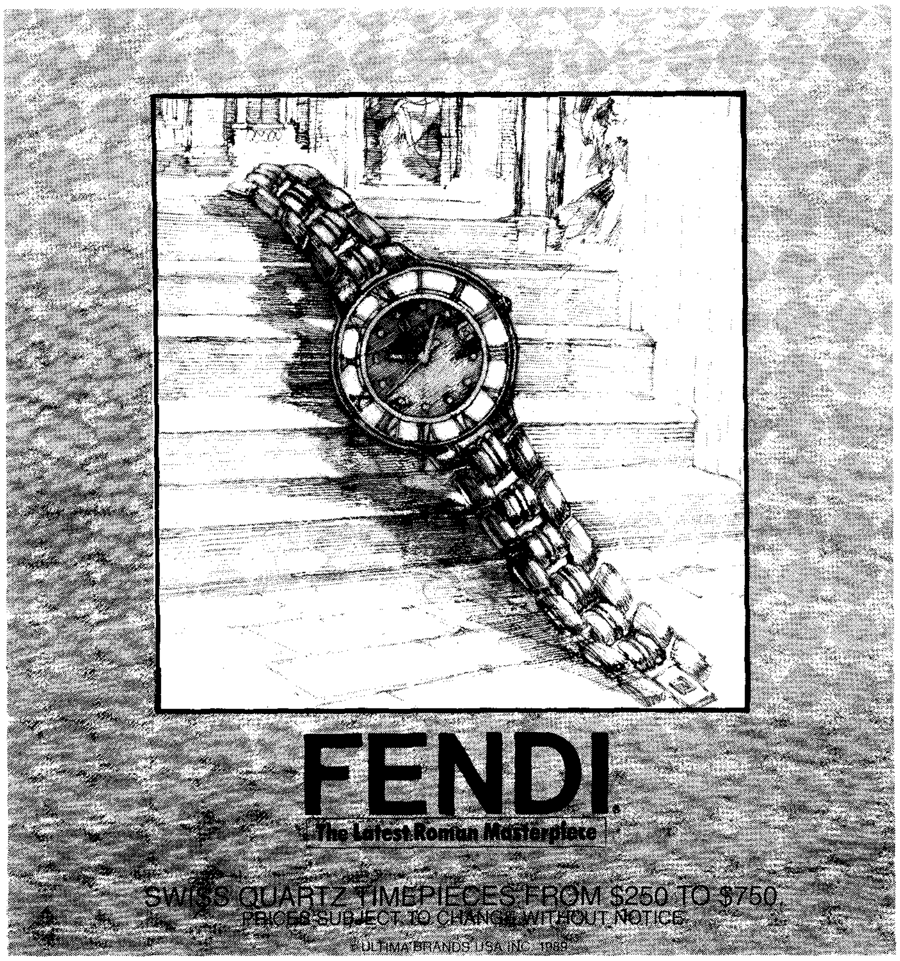
Opera at the Academy—Presenting its version of Henry Purcell's three-act opera "Dido and Aeneas." With Angelina Réaux and Jeffrey Ambrosini in the title roles. Conducted by Paul Connelly. (419 Lafayette St. Aug. 17-19, Aug. 21-22, and Aug. 24 at 9, and Aug. 23 at 8:30 and 10:30. For information about tickets, call 677-8960.)

OUT OF TOWN

Caramoor Music Festival—Final performances of the season—Aug. 18 at 9: Members of the Guarneri Quartet (Arnold Steinhardt, violin, and Michael Tree, viola and violin) and Virginia Eskin, piano, in a mixed program. . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 8:30: Blanche Honegger Moyse conducting the Orchestra of St. Luke's and the Blanche Moyse Chorale in an all-Bach program. With vocal soloists. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 5:30: The St. Luke's Chamber Ensemble performing all the Brandenburg Concertos. (Katonah, N.Y. Trains that leave Grand Central on Saturdays at 2:48 and 5:48, and on Sundays at 3:48, are met at Katonah by buses for Caramoor. For information about tickets and trains, call 1-914 232-5035.)

Tanglewood—Aug. 16 at 8:30: Alicia de Larrocha, piano, performing Albéniz's "Iberia." . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 9: Leonard Slatkin conducting the Canadian Brass, with members of the Boston Symphony and New York Philharmonic brass sections, in a varied program. . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 8:30: Seiji Ozawa conducting the Boston Symphony in an all-French program. With Jessye Norman, soprano, and the Tanglewood Festival Chorus. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 2:30: Leonard Slatkin conducting the Boston Symphony, with Midori, violin. . . . ¶ Aug. 23 at 2:30: The annual "Tanglewood on Parade" festivities, which include offerings by resident student musicians and a concert (8:30 P.M.) by the Boston Symphony and the Tanglewood Music Center Orchestra, conducted by Leonard Bernstein and John Williams. Fireworks follow the evening program. (Lenox, Mass. Through Aug. 27. For information about tickets, call 1-413 637-1940.)

Saratoga Performing Arts Center—Performances by the **philadelphia orchestra** continue through Aug. 25. Aug. 16: Yuri Temirkanov conducting an all-Tchaikovsky program, with Alexander Toradze, piano. . . . ¶ Aug.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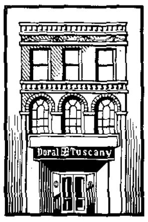

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212-686-1600/800-847-4078

Doral Tuscany

MUSIC—Cont'd

17: Yuri Temirkanov conducting a Beethoven-Weber-Dvořák program, with Emanuel Ax, piano. . . . ¶ Aug. 18: Keith Brion conducting an all-Sousa program. . . . ¶ Aug. 19: Erich Kunzel conducting a program entitled "An Evening with Cab Calloway." . . . ¶ Aug. 23: William Smith conducting works by Persichetti, Mozart, Delius, and Stravinsky. With Stephen Hough, piano. (Saratoga Springs, N.Y. 1-518 587-3330. Evenings at 8:15.)

JAZZ / POP / ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES, ETC.

Jimmy Cliff—Reggae's first international star has had a maddeningly uneven recording career, but last year's "Hanging Fire" album was a gem, and his live show is a delightful mélange of Jamaican, African, and funky American styles. (Palladium, 126 E. 14th St. 473-7171. Aug. 18 at 8.)

Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers—As Florida's contribution to classic rock and roll, Tom Petty embodies the triumph of good instincts and attitude over deficiencies of taste and calculation. It doesn't hurt to have a band that can somehow wring the most extravagant effects out of a restrained, self-effacing style. The opening act, the Replacements, on the other hand, employ no such subtleties in producing intense, thrashing rock (with a few ballads thrown in for good measure) for thoughtful headbangers. (Meadowlands Arena. 1-201 935-3900. Aug. 19 at 8.)

The Cure—Perhaps the only rock group in the world whose use of artificial fog onstage is aesthetically justified by its music, the Cure is also a kind of homeopathic treatment whereby massive doses of stately, trance-like gloom induce a sensation of, well, happiness. The theme of dementia will be introduced by the opening act, the Pixies, and the interlude of wan posing in this Mega-Mope concert will be handled by the second-billed Love and Rockets. (Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. 1-201 935-3900. Aug. 20 at 5.)

Bonnie Raitt—She has the sweet, rough voice of a woman wronged, and she plays the slide guitar as well as her old friend Lowell George did. Back in 1969, Bonnie Raitt left Radcliffe to sing the blues, and in the years following was seen with the likes of Sippie Wallace, Jackson Browne, and NRBQ. Then she dropped out of sight. Now middle-aged, Raitt is back with songs about babies and aging parents, but she's still the baddest good white girl ever. (Beacon Theatre. Aug. 23 at 8.)

LES MISER
TB

Living Colour—In benefit concerts. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Aug. 15-16 at 8.)

David Sanborn Band—Featuring Robben Ford, Don Alias, Tom Barney, Sonny Emory, and Ricky Peterson. Brenda Russell opens. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 757-3100. Aug. 16 at 8.)

Phyllis Hyman—With Pieces of a Dream and Bill Withers. (Beacon Theatre. Aug. 18 at 8 and midnight.)

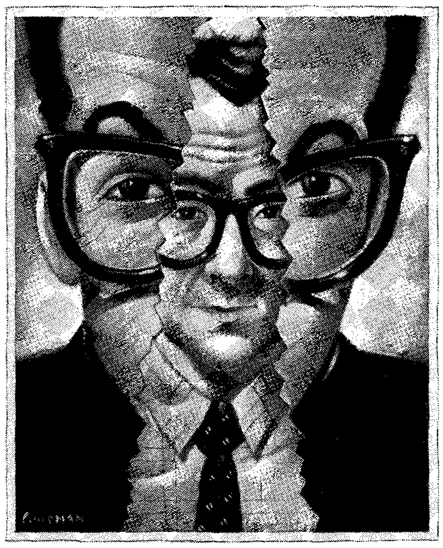
The The—Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Aug. 20 at 7:30.

Rick Astley—With Martika. (Radio City Music Hall. Aug. 22 at 8.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Mets—Vs. the San Diego Padres, Aug. 15-16 at 7:35, and Aug. 17 at 1:35. . . . ¶ Vs. the Los Angeles Dodgers, Aug. 18 at 7:35, Aug. 19 at 2:20, and Aug. 20 at 1:35. . . . ¶ Vs. the San Francisco Giants, Aug. 21-22 at 7:35, and Aug. 23 at 1:35.



Elvis Costello at Jones Beach

Yankees—Vs. the Boston Red Sox, Aug. 21-23 at 7:30.

(Home base for the Mets is Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; and for the Yankees, Yankee Stadium, 293-6000.)

RACING

Horses—At Saratoga Springs: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1:30. The Travers is on Aug. 19. . . . At Monmouth Park, Oceanport, N.J.: Weekdays at 1:30. Through Sept. 2. . . . **Trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8 and Tuesdays at 1. . . . At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30. Through Aug. 19. . . . At Saratoga Raceway, Saratoga Springs: Mondays through Saturdays at 7:45.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Fish Story—The South Street Seaport has the clean feeling of an educational resort: it teaches visitors, mainly tourists, about how New York used to be. The nearby Fulton Fish Market is quaint and historical, with its cobbled streets and ancient awnings, but it's also smelly with fish, crowded with commerce, and loud with yelling voices. The fish market, in other words, *is* what New York used to be, without the veneer of hindsight. Tourists are not unwelcome, just unnecessary. Insomniacs, historians, and lovers of fish and fish lore can brave the mess, though, and make a sunrise visit to the market. (Mondays and Thursdays are always the busiest.) Men with hooks hoist five-hundred-pound groupers off the tiny streets and onto dollies. Restaurateurs prod dark-red tuna bellies. Empty fish crates are piled under the F.D.R. Drive and burned; seagulls swoop down and snatch the roasted scales that rise with the smoke. Conversations with mongers reveal that salmon, when fresh, should smell like cucumbers; that lobsters are cannibals; that the wahoo is one of the largest members of the mackerel family; that Pearl Street is named for the oysters that used to wash up there. The experience is as vivid as a carnival, as startling as time travel. The market is open from midnight to 9 A.M. every weekday morning and is located near the East River, just east of the South Street Seaport, and just south of the Brooklyn Bridge.

Broadway Show League Championship—"Into the Woods" vs. Actors Equity, as actors, ushers, and stagehands play the final game of their softball season. (Central Park's 62nd St. Diamonds. Aug. 17 at about 1. In case of rain, call 769-8065.)

Lincoln Center Out-of-Doors—Aug. 15 at 5:15: Creach/Koester and David Zambrano. . . . At 7: The Goldman Band, conducted by Morton Gould and Keith Brion. . . . ¶ Aug. 16 at 5:15: "The Angle of Ascent," a performance piece. . . . At 8:15: Dayton Contemporary Dance Company. . . . ¶ Aug. 17 at 5:15: LadyGourd Sangoma. . . . At 8:15: Dayton Contemporary Dance Company. . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 5:15: Leroy Jenkins, Felicia Norton, and Mark Dendy. . . . At 6:30: Robert Aldridge. . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 5:30: Forces of Nature. . . . At 8:15: Johnny Colón and his orchestra, and Ray Barretto and his orchestra. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 3: Café Noir. . . . At 4: Rare Air. . . . At 5:30: Leon Thomas. . . . At 6:45: The David Grisman quartet. . . . At 8: Poncho Sanchez. . . . ¶ Aug. 22 at 7: The Amherst Saxophone Quartet. . . . At 8:15: Scat dancing and music, with Larry Ridley and the Jazz Legacy Ensemble, C. Scoby Stroman, Mickey Davidson, and Buster Brown. . . . ¶ Aug. 23 at 8:15: Tap dancing and music, with Fred Strickler, Manhattan Tap, Charles (Cookie) Cook, Anita Feldman, Michele Hendricks, and Althea Waites. (Lincoln Center. No tickets necessary.)

Jones Beach Theatre—Although this year's album, the zigzaggingly eclectic "Spike," is probably more admired than listened to, it will be exciting to hear how **Elvis Costello** performs his new songs onstage, along with selections from the dozen previous word-happy records. After a solo set (with ferocious playing, making at least one broken guitar string likely), the living Elvis will be joined by a six-man band dubbed the Rude 5, featuring Tom Waits' lead guitarist, the spooky genius Marc Ribot. In a summer dominated by lax nostalgia tours, this is the Anti-Concert. (Aug. 23-24.) . . . ¶ Also this week, on Aug. 15: Gipsy Kings. . . . ¶ Aug. 16: Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, and the Replacements. . . . ¶ Aug. 18: B-52's. . . . ¶ Aug. 19: The Bee Gees and the Nylons. (Evenings at 8. For information about tickets, call 1-516 221-1000.)

World Financial Center—Aug. 16 at 6:30: Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane & Co. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 2: Gonzalo Rubalcaba. (Battery Park City. No tickets necessary.)

W
INTO THE WOODS
TB

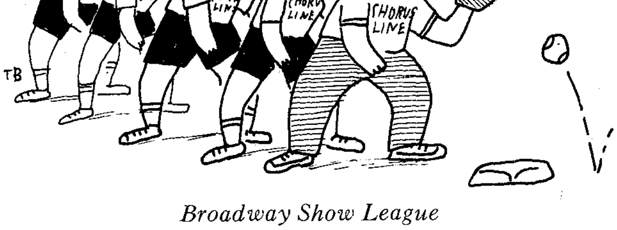
Prospect Park Band Shell—The Kings County Shakespeare Company in performances of "Measure for Measure." (Aug. 16-20 and Aug. 22-24 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Music Cruise—With Dizzy Gillespie. (Hudson River Dayliner, Pier 81, Twelfth Ave. at 41st St. Aug. 18 at 8. For information about tickets, call 956-5550.)

Central Park Band Shell—Aug. 18 at 8:30: Victoria Marks Performance Company, with Hilary Easton. . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 3: Ambitious Lovers and J.J. Jumpers. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 3: Yomo Toro. (Mid-Park at 72nd St. No tickets necessary. For rain-date information, call 860-1335.)

Riverside Park Rotunda—Aug. 19 at 4: Susan Jacobson & Dancers. . . . ¶ At 6: Jonny H. & the Six Cents. . . . ¶ Eliane Elias and Randy Brecker. (W. 79th St., near the Boat Basin. No tickets necessary.)

Riverstage—Great White and Tesla, with Badlands. (Pier 84, Twelfth Ave. at 45th St. Aug. 21 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 757-3100.)



Broadway Show League

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 19.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: From Aug. 18: "Emma's Shadow" (directed by Soeren Kragh-Jacobsen; in Danish).
Theatre 2: From Aug. 18: "Shell Shock" (Yoel Sharon).
Theatre 3: From Aug. 18: "Let It Ride" (Joe Pytka), with Richard Dreyfuss, David Johansen, Teri Garr, and Allen Garfield.
Theatre 4: From Aug. 18: "Cheetah" (Jeff Blyth), with Keith Coogan.

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Through Aug. 17: Theatre closed.
From Aug. 18: "La Boca del Lobo" (1988, Francisco J. Lombardi; a Peruvian film, in Spanish). Closed Mondays.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Abyss" (James Cameron), with Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Michael Biehn.
Theatre 3: "Young Einstein" (Yahoo Serious), with Serious.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Turner & Hooch" (Roger Spottiswoode), with Tom Hanks.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"The Abyss" (James Cameron), with Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Michael Biehn.

Murray Hill, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
"Batman" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child" (Stephen Hopkins), with Robert Englund.
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 17: "Licence to Kill" (John Glen), with Timothy Dalton, Carey Lowell, Robert Davi, Talisa Soto, and Anthony Zerbe. From Aug. 18: "Let It Ride" (Joe Pytka), with Richard Dreyfuss, David Johansen, Teri Garr, and Allen Garfield.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Parenthood" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†).

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
"Lethal Weapon 2" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"The Abyss" (James Cameron), with Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Michael Biehn.

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Ghostbusters II" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child" (Stephen Hopkins), with Robert Englund.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 15: "Do the Right Thing" (†). From Aug. 16: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy and Amy Madigan.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Do the Right Thing" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 17: "Parenthood" (†). From Aug. 18: "Casualties of War" (†).
Theatre 2: "Parenthood" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).
Theatre 2: "Turner & Hooch" (Roger Spottiswoode), with Tom Hanks.
Theatre 3: "Distant Voices, Still Lives" (Terence Davies), with Freda Dowie and Peter Postlethwaite.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 17: "Young Einstein" (Yahoo Serious), with Serious. From Aug. 18: "Eddie and the Cruisers II: Eddie Lives" (Jean-Claude Lord), with Michael Paré and Matthew Laurance.
Theatre 2: "Lock Up" (John Flynn), with Sylvester Stallone, Donald Sutherland, John Amos, Darlanne Fluegel, and Sonny Landham.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 15: "UHF" (Jay Levey), with "Weird Al" Yankovic. From Aug. 16: "Rude Awakening" (Aaron Russo and David Greenwalt), with Cheech Marin, Eric Roberts, Julie Hagerty, and Robert Carradine.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 17: "Licence to Kill" (John Glen), with Timothy Dalton, Carey Lowell, Robert Davi, Talisa Soto, and Anthony Zerbe. From Aug. 18: "Let It Ride" (Joe Pytka), with Richard Dreyfuss, David Johansen, Teri Garr, and Allen Garfield.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Dead Poets Society" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Parenthood" (†).

Loews Orpheum I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (289-4607)
Theatre 1: "The Abyss" (James Cameron), with Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Michael Biehn.
Theatre 2: "A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child" (Stephen Hopkins), with Robert Englund.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 17: "Turner & Hooch" (Roger Spottiswoode), with Tom Hanks. From Aug. 18: "Cheetah" (Jeff Blyth), with Keith Coogan.
Theatre 2: "Batman" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum I, 57 Watts St. (431-1590)
Through Aug. 22: "Machine Dreams" (directed by Peter Krieg; in English and German).
From Aug. 23: "Cannibal Tours" (Dennis O'Rourke), a documentary.

Bleecker Street Cinema I and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)
Theatre 1: Through Aug. 15: "The American Soldier" (1970, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Karl Scheydt and Margarethe von Trotta; and "Katzelmacher" (1969, Fassbinder; in German), with Hanna Schygulla, Harry Baer, and Fassbinder. . . . ¶ Aug. 16-17: "Ali: Fear Eats the Soul" (1974, Fassbinder; in German), with Brigitte Mira. . . . ¶ Aug. 18-20: "Effi Briest" (1974, Fassbinder; in German), with Schygulla and Wolfgang Schenck. . . . ¶ Aug. 21-22: "Mother Küsters Goes to Heaven" (1975, Fassbinder; in German), with Mira; and "The Third Generation" (1979, Fassbinder; in German), with Eddie Constantine and Schygulla. . . . ¶ From Aug. 23: "In a Year of 13 Moons" (1978, Fassbinder; in German), with Volker Spengler.
Theatre 2: "Chocolat" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).
Theatre 2: "Friday the 13th, Part VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan" (Rob Hedden).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Lethal Weapon 2" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Parenthood" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 17: "Do the Right Thing" (†). From Aug. 18: "Casualties of War" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Les Liaisons Dangereuses" (†).
Theatre 2: "Peter Pan" (1953), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon.
Theatre 3: "The Navigator: An Odyssey Across Time" (Vincent Ward), with Bruce Lyons.
Theatre 4: "Dead Poets Society" (†).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).
Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon 2" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Abyss" (James Cameron), with Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Michael Biehn.
Theatre 4: "Parenthood" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Abyss."
Theatre 6: Through Aug. 17: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†). From Aug. 18: "Casualties of War" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Do the Right Thing" (†).
Theatre 2: "Lock Up" (John Flynn), with Sylvester Stallone, Donald Sutherland, John Amos, Darlanne Fluegel, and Sonny Landham.
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 15: "Young Einstein" (Yahoo Serious), with Serious. From Aug. 16: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy and Amy Madigan.

Worldwide Cinemas, 49th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).
Theatre 2: "Do the Right Thing" (†).
Theatre 3: "Parenthood" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Aug. 17: "When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†). From Aug. 18: "Casualties of War" (†).
Theatre 5: "Parenthood" (†).
Theatre 6: From Aug. 16: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy and Amy Madigan.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Dead Poets Society" (†).

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"The Abyss" (James Cameron), with Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Michael Biehn.

Basil Rathbone was born to wear Sherlock Holmes' cape and deerstalker cap, to smoke his brierroot pipe, and to rattle off his ratiocinations with a merry hubris. Rathbone's perfect wedge of a profile sliced through the London fog, and he used his imposing brow to signal one idea while his glinting eyes intimated another. He and Nigel Bruce, as Dr. Watson, developed a rapport as close, and sometimes as comic, as that of Hope and Crosby. Bruce's Watson rarely made the Ed McMahon-like error of applauding Holmes' cleverness too loudly; more often he was like a genteel Sancho Panza, suspicious of the great detective's fantastic rationality.

Rathbone and Bruce are at full throttle in "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" (playing Aug. 19 and 21 at the Museum of Modern Art), which came out the same year—1939—as their more elegant but less energetic first effort, "The Hound of the Baskervilles." In "The Adventures," Rathbone seizes the chance to celebrate and satirize—simultaneously—Holmes' peripatetic brilliance. The plot hinges on the arch-villain Professor Moriarty's attempt to exploit the restlessness of Holmes' intelligence; he sends the sleuth on a wild-albatross chase while the evil genius himself schemes to make off with the crown jewels. The result is everything a civilized thriller should be: witty, playful, and exciting. And the young Ida Lupino brings a hint of sexuality into Holmes' hermetic universe. She's refreshingly fervid—you can feel the heart of a dame beating within the damsel in distress.

Sean Penn and Michael J. Fox in "Casualties of War"

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
Through Aug. 17: "The Navigator: An Odyssey Across Time" (Vincent Ward), with Bruce Lyons.
From Aug. 18: "Cheetah" (Jeff Blyth), with Keith Coogan.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Young Einstein" (Yahoo Serious), with Serious.

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
"Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)
"Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)
Through Aug. 17: "Eat a Bowl of Tea" (Wayne Wang).
From Aug. 18: "A Chorus of Disapproval" (Michael Winner), with Anthony Hopkins and Jeremy Irons.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Field of Dreams" (†).

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Dead Poets Society" (†).

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Four Adventures of Reinette and Mirabelle" (†).
Theatre 2: "A Taxing Woman Returns" (Juzo Itami; in Japanese), with Nobuko Miyamoto.
Theatre 3: "The Music Teacher" (Gérard Corbiau; in French).

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)
Theatre 1: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).
Theatre 2: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"When Harry Met Sally . . ." (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 17: "Lock Up" (John Flynn), with Sylvester Stallone, Donald Sutherland, John Amos, Darlanne Fluegel, and Sonny Landham. From Aug. 18: "Let It Ride" (Joe Pytka), with Richard Dreyfuss, David Johansen, Teri Garr, and Allen Garfield.
Theatre 3: "A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child" (Stephen Hopkins), with Robert Englund.
Theatre 4: Through Aug. 15: "Licence to Kill" (John Glen), with Timothy Dalton, Carey Lowell, Robert Davi, Talisa Soto, and Anthony Zerbe. From Aug. 16: "Rude Awakening" (Aaron Russo and David Greenwalt), with Cheech Marin, Eric Roberts, Julie Hagerty, and Robert Carradine.
Theatre 5: "Lethal Weapon 2" (†).
Theatre 6: "Turner & Hooch" (Roger Spottiswoode), with Tom Hanks.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Parenthood" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 15: "Do the Right Thing" (†). From Aug. 16: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy and Amy Madigan.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "The Abyss" (James Cameron), with Ed Harris, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Michael Biehn.
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 17: "Young Einstein" (Yahoo Serious), with Serious. From Aug. 18: "Casualties of War" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Batman" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 17: "Young Einstein" (directed by Yahoo Serious), with Serious. From Aug. 18: "Eddie and the Cruisers II: Eddie Lives" (Jean-Claude Lord), with Michael Paré and Matthew Laurance.
Theatre 3: "Licence to Kill" (John Glen), with Timothy Dalton.
Theatre 4: "Friday the 13th, Part VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan" (Rob Hedden).
Theatre 5: Through Aug. 17: "Friday the 13th, Part VIII: Jason Takes Manhattan." From Aug. 18: "Let It Ride" (Joe Pytka), with Richard Dreyfuss.
Theatre 6: "Lock Up" (John Flynn), with Sylvester Stallone, Donald Sutherland, John Amos, Darlanne Fluegel, and Sonny Landham.

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
Through Aug. 15: "Turner & Hooch" (Roger Spottiswoode), with Tom Hanks.
From Aug. 16: "Turner & Hooch"; and "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 2: "Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Aug. 15: "Honey, I Shrunk the Kids" (†). From Aug. 16: "Rude Awakening" (Aaron Russo and David Greenwalt), with Cheech Marin, Eric Roberts, Julie Hagerty, and Robert Carradine.
Theatre 4: Through Aug. 17: "Peter Pan" (1953), a full-length Walt Disney cartoon. From Aug. 18: "Cheetah" (Jeff Blyth), with Keith Coogan.

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"A Nightmare on Elm Street 5: The Dream Child" (Stephen Hopkins), with Robert Englund.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Parenthood" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Aug. 17: "Do the Right Thing" (†). From Aug. 18: "Casualties of War" (†).

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)
Through Aug. 15: "Ghostbusters II" (†).
From Aug. 16: "Uncle Buck" (John Hughes), with John Candy and Amy Madigan.

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "Lethal Weapon 2" (†).
Theatre 2: "Lethal Weapon 2" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Through Aug. 19: Feature films shown as part of Festival Latino in New York. In Spanish or Portuguese, with English subtitles.
Aug. 20-21: "Our Hospitality" (1923, directed by Buster Keaton and Jack G. Blystone), with Keaton; and "The Freshman" (1925, Sam Taylor and Fred Newmeyer), with Harold Lloyd.
Aug. 22: "Palmy Days" (1931, Edward Sutherland), with Eddie Cantor, George Raft, and Charlotte Greenwood; and "State Fair" (1933, Henry King), with Will Rogers, Janet Gaynor, and Lew Ayres.
From Aug. 23: "Speedy" (1928, Ted Wilde; silent), with Harold Lloyd; and "Blockheads" (1938, John G. Blystone), with Laurel and Hardy.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
Through Aug. 15: "Moonstruck" (1987, Norman Jewison), with Cher, Nicolas Cage, Olympia Dukakis, Julie Bovasso, Vincent Gardenia, Danny Aiello, John Mahoney, and Anita Gillette; and "The Mad Adventures of 'Rabbi' Jacob" (1973, Gérard Oury; in French), with Louis de Funès.
Aug. 16-17: "Annie Hall" (1977, Woody Allen), with Allen and Diane Keaton; and "New York Stories" (1989; Allen, Francis Coppola, and Martin Scorsese), with Nick Nolte, Allen, Mia Farrow, Mae Questel, and Julie Kavner.
Aug. 18-19: "Diva" (1981, Jean-Jacques Beineix; in French), with Wilhelmenia Fernandez and Frédéric Andrei; and "Betty Blue" (1986, Beineix; in French), with Jean-Hugues Anglade and Béatrice Dalle.
Aug. 20: "We Think the World of You" (1988, Colin Gregg), with Alan Bates and Gary Oldman; and "The Dressmaker" (1988, Jim O'Brien), with Joan Plowright and Billie Whitelaw.
Aug. 21-22: "To Have and Have Not" (1944, Howard Hawks), with Humphrey Bogart, Lauren Bacall, and Walter Brennan; and "Dark Passage" (1947, Delmer Daves), with Bogart, Bacall, and Agnes Moorehead.
From Aug. 23: "Dangerous Liaisons" (1988, Stephen Frears), with Glenn Close, John Malkovich, Michelle Pfeiffer, and Uma Thurman; and "The French Lieutenant's Woman" (†).

Film Forum 2, 57 Watts St. (431-1590)
Aug. 14: "Deluge" (1933, Felix E. Feist); and "Secrets of F.P.I." (1932, Karl Hartl), with Conrad Veidt.
Aug. 15-16: "Dead of Night" (1945), a five-part English film about the supernatural; and "Dr. Terror's House of Horrors" (1965, Freddie Francis), with Peter Cushing and Christopher Lee.
Aug. 17: "Jason and the Argonauts" (1963, Don Chaffey), with Todd Armstrong and Nancy Kovack; and "Hercules in the Haunted World" (1961, Mario Bava), with Reg Park and Christopher Lee.
Aug. 18-19: "Laputa: Castle in the Sky" (1988, Hayao Miyazaki), an animated film; and animated short films by Tex Avery, the Fleischers, Chuck Jones, and others.
Aug. 20: "Alphaville" (†) and "Eyes Without a Face" (†).
Aug. 21: "Dr. X" (1932, Michael Curtiz), with Preston Foster, Fay Wray, Lee Tracy, and Lionel Atwill; and "Mystery of the Wax Museum" (1933, Curtiz), with Atwill, Wray, and Glenda Farrell.
Aug. 22: "I Married a Monster from Outer Space" (1958, Gene Fowler), with Tom Tryon and Gloria Talbott; and "The Space Children" (1958, Jack Arnold).
From Aug. 23: "Giant from the Unknown" (1958, Richard E. Cunha), with Buddy Baer; "Frankenstein's Daughter" (1958, Cunha), with John Ashley and Sandra Knight; and "She Demons" (1958, Cunha), with Irish McCalla.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)
Aug. 14: "Shifting Sands" (1918, Albert Parker; silent), with Gloria Swanson; and "Sold for Marriage" (1916, Christy Cabanne; silent), with Lillian Gish.
Aug. 15: "The Dybbuk" (1938, Michael Waszynsky); and two short films.
Aug. 16: "Charade" (1963, Stanley Donen), with Cary Grant, Audrey Hepburn, Walter Matthau, James Coburn, George Kennedy, Ned Glass, and Jacques Marin; and "Breakfast at Tiffany's" (1961, Blake Edwards), with Hepburn, George Peppard, Patricia Neal, Martin Balsam, and Mickey Rooney.

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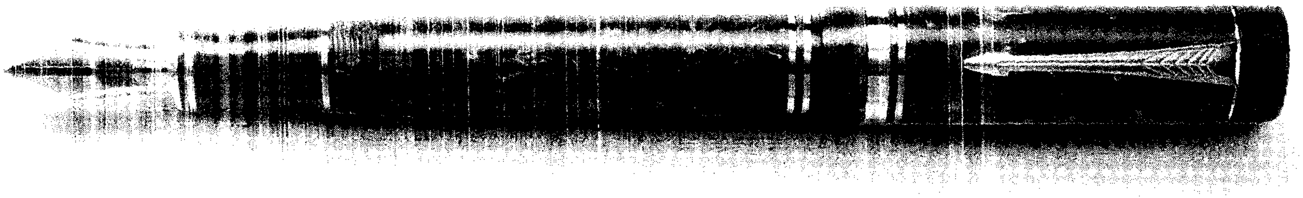

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MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

Aug. 17: "Rich and Strange" (1932, Alfred Hitchcock), with Henry Kendall and Joan Barry; "The Farmer's Wife" (1928, Hitchcock), with Jameson Thomas; and "The Ring" (1927, Hitchcock; silent), with Carl Brisson.

Aug. 18-19: "The 5,000 Fingers of Dr. T." (1953, Roy Rowland), with Peter Lind Hayes, Mary Healy, Hans Conried, and Tommy Rettig; and "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" (1971, Mel Stuart), with Gene Wilder and Jack Albertson.

Aug. 20: "Nights of Cabiria" (†); and "Till Marriage Do Us Part" (1974, Luigi Comencini; in Italian), with Laura Antonelli.

Aug. 21: "Feel My Pulse" (1928, Gregory La Cava; silent), with Bebe Daniels, William Powell, and Richard Arlen; and "Going Straight" (1916, C. and S. Franklin; silent), with Eugene Pallette.

Aug. 22: "Masculine Feminine" (1965, Jean-Luc Godard), with Jean-Pierre Léaud; and "Le Gai Savoir" (1968, Godard; in French), with Léaud.

Aug. 23: "The Brasher Doubloon" (1947, John Brahm), with George Montgomery; and "The Big Sleep" (1946 †).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Aug. 14: "Les Biches" (1968, Claude Chabrol; in French), with Jacqueline Sassard, Jean-Louis Trintignant, and Stéphane Audran; and "My Life to Live" (1962, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Anna Karina.

Aug. 15: "Charlie Chan at the Wax Museum" (1940, Lynn Shores), with Sidney Toler as Chan; and "Charlie Chan's Secret" (1936, Gordon Wiles), with Warner Oland as Chan.

Aug. 16: "I Could Go On Singing" (1963, Ronald Neame), with Judy Garland, Dirk Bogarde, Jack Klugman, and Aline MacMahon; and "The Star" (1963, Stuart Heisler), with Bette Davis and Sterling Hayden.

Aug. 17: "The Shopworn Angel" (†); and "The Shop Around the Corner" (1940, Ernst Lubitsch), with Margaret Sullavan and James Stewart.

Aug. 18-19: "Notorious" (1946, Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Ingrid Bergman, Claude Rains, and Louis Calhern; and "Spellbound" (1945, Hitchcock), with Bergman, Gregory Peck, Michael Chekhov, John Emery, and Leo G. Carroll.

Aug. 20: "Stage Fright" (1950, Alfred Hitchcock), with Jane Wyman, Marlene Dietrich, Richard Todd, and Michael Wilding; and "Strangers on a Train" (1951, Hitchcock), with Robert Walker and Farley Granger.

Aug. 21: "The Damned" (1969, Luchino Visconti), with Dirk Bogarde, Ingrid Thulin, and Helmut Berger; and "The Innocent" (1976, Visconti; in Italian), with Giancarlo Giannini, Laura Antonelli, and Jennifer O'Neill.

Aug. 22: "The Browning Version" (1951, Anthony Asquith), with Michael Redgrave, Jean Kent, and Nigel Patrick; and "The Winslow Boy" (1950, Asquith), with Robert Donat, Cedric Hardwicke, Francis L. Sullivan, and Margaret Leighton.

Aug. 23: "Anna Christie" (1930, Clarence Brown), with Greta Garbo, Charles Bickford, and Marie Dressler; and "Anna Karenina" (1935, Brown), with Garbo, Fredric March, and Basil Rathbone.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—Hollywood films made in 1939. Aug. 14 at 2:30: "Son of Frankenstein" (directed by Rowland V. Lee), with Basil Rathbone, Boris Karloff, and Bela Lugosi. . . . ¶ Aug. 14 at 6: "Tower of London" (Lee), with Rathbone, Karloff, and Vincent Price. . . . ¶ Aug. 15 at 2:30: "First Love" (Henry Koster), with Deanna Durbin, Robert Stack, and Leatrice Joy. . . . ¶ Aug. 15 at 6: "Four Wives" (Michael Curtiz), with Claude Rains, John Garfield, and the Lane Sisters. . . . ¶ Aug. 17 at 2:30: "Tower of London." . . . ¶ Aug. 17 at 6: "Five Came Back" (John Farrow), with Chester Morris, Lucille Ball, and John Carradine. . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 2:30: "Four Wives." . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 6: "We Are Not Alone" (Edmund Goulding), with Paul Muni, Jane Bryan, and Flora Robson. . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 2: "Five Came Back." . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 5: "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" (Alfred Werker), with Rathbone, Nigel Bruce, and Ida Lupino. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 2: "We Are Not Alone." . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 5: "On Borrowed Time" (Harold S. Bucquet), with Lionel Barrymore, Cedric Hardwicke, and Beulah Bondi. . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 2:30: "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes." . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 6: "The Cat and the Canary" (Elliott Nugent), with Bob Hope, Paulette Goddard, and Gale Sondergaard. . . . ¶ Aug. 22 at 2:30: "Invitation to Happiness" (Wesley Ruggles), with Irene Dunne, Fred MacMurray, and Charles Ruggles. . . . ¶ Aug. 22 at 6: "On Borrowed Time."

Film Society of Lincoln Center—New Wave French films. Aug. 14 at 6:15: "Zazie dans la Métro" (1960, Louis Malle). . . . ¶ Aug. 14 at 8:30: "Le Petit Soldat" (1960, Jean-Luc Godard). . . . ¶ Aug. 15 at 6:15: "Cleo from 5 to 7" (1961, Agnès Varda). . . . ¶ Aug. 15 at 8:30: "Last Year at Marienbad" (1961, Alain Resnais). . . . ¶ Aug. 16 at 6:15: "Chronicle of a Summer" (1961, Jean Rouch and Edgar Morin). . . . ¶ Aug. 16 at 8:30: "A Woman Is a Woman" (1961, Godard), with Anna Karina, Jean-Claude Brialy, and Jean-Paul Belmondo. . . . ¶ Aug. 17 at 6:15: "My Life to Live" (1962, Godard), with Karina. . . . ¶ Aug. 17 at 8:30: "Muriel" (1963, Resnais), with Delphine Seyrig. . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 6:15: "The Fire Within" (1964, Malle), with Maurice Ronet and Jeanne Moreau. . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 8:45: "Jules and Jim" (1962, François Truffaut), with Moreau and Oskar Werner. . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 2:30: "The Soft Skin" (1964, Truffaut), with Françoise Dorléac. . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 5: "Six in Paris" (1965, Jean-Daniel Pollet, Rouch, Jean Douchet, Eric Rohmer, Godard, and Claude Chabrol). . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 7: "Alphaville" (1965, Godard), with Eddie Constantine. . . . ¶ Aug. 19 at 9:30: "Le Bonheur" (1965, Varda). . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 2:30: "La Collectionneuse" (1967, Rohmer). . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 4:30: "Masculine Feminine" (1965, Godard), with Jean-Pierre Léaud. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 7: "Stolen Kisses" (1969, Truffaut), with Léaud, Seyrig, and Claude Jade. . . . ¶ Aug. 20 at 9: "Weekend" (1967, Godard), with Mireille Darc and Jean Yanne. . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 6:15: "This Man Must Die" (1969, Chabrol). . . . ¶ Aug. 21 at 8:45: "My Night at Maud's" (1969, Rohmer), with Jean-Louis Trintignant and François Fabian. . . . ¶ Aug. 22 at 6:15: "Day for Night" (1973, Truffaut), with Jacqueline Bisset and Léaud. . . . ¶ Aug. 22 at 8:45: "Claire's Knee" (1971, Rohmer), with Brialy. . . . ¶ Aug. 23 at 6:15: "Céline and Julie Go Boating" (1973, Jacques Rivette), with Dominique Lebourier and Juliet Berto. (Alice Tully Hall. 362-1911.)

Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. (662-2133)—Aug. 17 at 8: "The Kid Brother" (1927, Ted Wilde), with Harold Lloyd. Organ accompaniment written and played by Lee Erwin.

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building, eighth floor, 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—Aug. 14 at 1, 3:30, and 6:05: "Native Son" (1951, Pierre Chenal), with Richard Wright. . . . ¶ Aug. 14 at 2:35, 5:10, and 7:40: "Almos' a Man" (1976), with LeVar Burton and Madge Sinclair. . . . ¶ Aug. 15 at 2, 4, 6, and 8: Four 1951 episodes of the "Amos 'n' Andy" show. . . . ¶ Aug. 16 at 1, 4:10, and 7:20: "Stormy Weather" (1943, Andrew Stone), with Lena Horne, Bill Robinson, Cab Calloway, and Fats Waller. . . . ¶ Aug. 16 at 2:20 and 5:30: "Cabin in the Sky" (1943, Vincente Minnelli), with Ethel Waters, Eddie Anderson, and Lena Horne. . . . ¶ Aug. 17 at 2, 4:15, and 6:30: "Black Orpheus" (1960, Marcel Camus), with Breno Melo and Marpessa Dawn. . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at noon, 3:10, and 6:35: "The Spook Who Sat by the Door" (1973, Ivan Dixon), with Lawrence Cook, Paula Kelly, and Janet League. . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 1:35 and 5: "Nothing but a Man" (1963, Michael Roemer), with Dixon, Abbey Lincoln, Gloria Foster, Dick Ward, and Yaphet Kotto. . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 9: "Dolemite" (1975, D'Urville Martin), with Rudy Ray Moore. . . . ¶ Aug. 18 at 10:35: "The Human Tornado" (1976), with Moore.

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

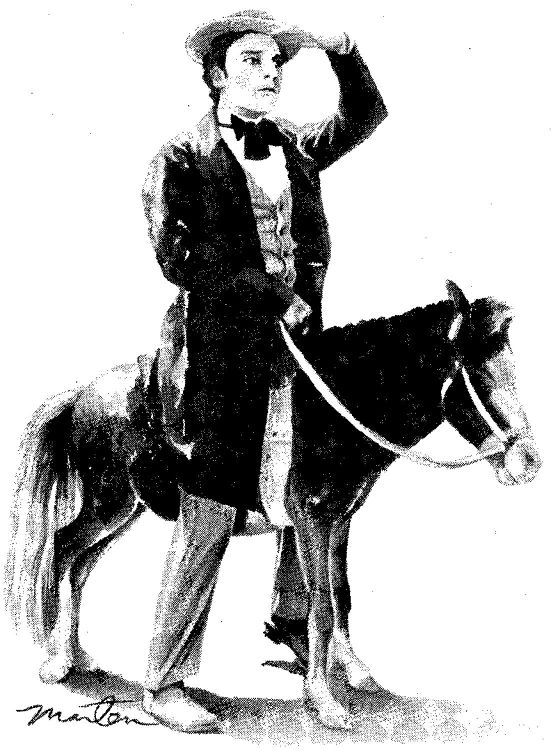
(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Terrence Rafferty.)

Alphaville (1965)—Jean-Luc Godard ventures into science fiction, with mixed results. The picture is brilliant, yet it's no good. Godard found enough of the future in present-day Paris to create a vision of a new world without constructing sets; it's a sleek, dark, glittering society—at first, the dehumanization is funny and alluring and a little eerie. The modern corridors and ramps and the flickering lights suggest something almost supernaturally impersonal. But the people of Alphaville are ruled by a giant computer, and soullessness can be very monotonous. The movie was shot at night, and it seems to give off powerfully soporific vapors, especially since the comic-strip story is an uninspired mixture of sci-fi and private eye that never takes hold. With Eddie Constantine as cool, tough Lemmy Caution (his face is so tired and leathery he's like an old shoe); Anna Karina—she's the most radiant of robots; and Akim Tamiroff. Written and directed by Godard. In French.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Aug. 20.)

Batman—Tim Burton's powerfully glamorous comic-book epic, with sets angled and lighted like film noir, goes beyond pulp. It has a funky, nihilistic charge, and an eerie, poetic intensity. Michael Keaton is the fabulously wealthy Bruce Wayne, who patrols the sinister nighttime canyons of Gotham City in the guise of Batman, and Jack Nicholson is the sniggering mobster Jack Napier, who turns into the leering madman the Joker. The two are fighting for the soul of the city that spawned them. The movie is underwritten, but it has so many unpredictable spins that what's missing doesn't seem to matter much. It's mean and anarchic and blissful. Written by Sam Hamm, Warren Skaaren (and uncredited others), based on characters created by Bob Kane. With cinematography by Roger Pratt; design by Anton Furst; costumes by Bob Ringwood; a plangent score by Danny Elfman; and songs by Prince. The cast includes Jack Palance, Kim Basinger, Jerry Hall, and Robert Wuhl.—P.K. (Reviewed in our issue of 7/10/89.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Murray Hill, Cinema I, 86th Street East Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

The Big Sleep (1946)—Humphrey Bogart is Raymond Chandler's private eye in this witty, incredibly complicated thriller. You may not be able to figure out the plot even after the dénouement (Chandler reported that while the film was in production, William Faulkner and the other screenwriters had to appeal to him for guidance, and apparently Chandler couldn't exactly figure it out either), but it's the dialogue and the entertaining qualities of the individual sequences that make this movie. It takes place in the big city of displaced persons—the night city, where sensation is all. The action is tense and fast, and the film catches the lurid Chandler atmosphere. The characters are a collection of sophisticated monsters—blackmailers, pornographers, apathetic society girls (Lauren Bacall and Martha Vickers are a baffling pair of spoiled sisters; the latter sucks her thumb), drug addicts, nymphomaniacs (a brunette Dorothy Malone seduces the hero in what must surely be record time), murderers. All of them talk in innuendoes, as if that were a new stylization of the American language, but how reassuring it is to know what the second layer of meaning refers to. Howard Hawks directed—and so well that you may even enjoy the fact that, as he says, "Neither the author, the writer, nor myself knew who had killed whom."—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 23.)

Casualties of War—With Michael J. Fox and Sean Penn, directed by Brian De Palma.



At the Biograph Cinema, Buster Keaton in "Our Hospitality"

(Reviewed in this issue.) (Baronet, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Olympia, and National Twin; starting Aug. 18.)

Chocolat—Whatever Claire Denis's first feature is supposed to be about, it proves, at least, that the English don't have a monopoly on swanky colonial torpor. The movie is constructed as an extended flashback: a young Frenchwoman (named France) travelling in Africa remembers her fifties girlhood in a remote outpost of Cameroon, where her father was a district officer. Most of this story consists of smoldering looks exchanged by the girl's beautiful mother (Giulia Boschi) and the family's handsome African "boy," Protée (Isaach de Bankolé). When Maman feels herself becoming too hot and bothered at the sight of the noble black man, she brusquely orders him to fetch something; Protée deals with his frustration by taking a lot of showers. Nothing actually happens. In denying him any kind of release for his pent-up desire, Denis encourages us to think she's making a political point. What she's really doing is dehumanizing him—treating him as a gleaming hunk whose anger and wounded reserve just make him more exotically alluring. "Chocolat" looks pretty good, but it's *merde* in a fancy wrapper. In French.—T.R. (Bleecker Street Cinema.)

Dead Poets Society—Robin Williams gives an astonishingly empathic performance as an eager, dedicated prep-school teacher in the late fifties. This teacher talks to his boys about the passions expressed in poetry and helps them release their creative impulses. But one of the boys, soaring on his new confidence, lacks the shrewdness and courage to deal with his rigid, uncomprehending father, and makes a disastrous choice. Directed by Peter Weir, from a script by Thomas Schulman, the picture draws out the obvious and turns itself into a classic. Weir, it appears, is more interested in the elegiac than in the dramatic. Like his "Gallipoli," this film has a gold ribbon attached to it. With Robert Sean Leonard, Ethan Hawke, Josh Charles, Gale Hansen, and Kurtwood Smith and Norman Lloyd.—P.K. (6/26/89) (68th St. Playhouse, Quad Cinema, Guild, and Loews Paramount.)

Do the Right Thing—The third feature by Spike Lee takes place in the black neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, on a punishingly hot day; the focus of the action is a pizzeria, Sal's Famous, which is apparently the last white-owned business on the block; and the climax is a riot sparked by a monstrous act of police brutality. At its most basic, Lee's intention is to demonstrate how in a racially polarized society the slow accumulation of small irritations can swell to something huge and ugly and lethal. It's a solid idea for a movie, and initially the picture provides its share of incidental pleasures. And, although most of the many characters Lee shows us are types, at least there are a lot of different ones, and their encounters are often funny. But Lee goes wrong by pushing his material to a "powerful" climax, a Scorsese-like explosion of violence: he sacrifices political clarity for the sake of the big statement. He's nimble-witted and passionate, but his movie seems to shout at us rather than speak to us. In addition to writing, producing, and directing, Lee plays the pivotal role of Mookie, the pizza deliveryman. Others in the cast are Danny Aiello (as Sal), Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, Giancarlo Esposito, Bill Nunn, Rosie Perez, Joie Lee, John Turturro, and Richard Edson; as a trio of middle-aged street-corner philosophers, Paul Benjamin, Frankie Faison, and Robin Harris are responsible for the movie's best, loosest scenes.—T.R. (7/24/89) (59th Street East Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . ¶ Manhattan Twin, and Metro Cinema; through Aug. 15. . . . ¶ Art Greenwich Twin, and National Twin; through Aug. 17.)

Eyes Without a Face (1959)—This famous film by Georges Franju opened in this country on double bills in a dubbed version called "The Horror Chamber of Dr. Faustus," but it's perhaps the most austerely elegant horror film ever made. Franju called it "a poetic fantasy," and it's a symbolist attack on the ethics of scientists. Though in its way it's as simpleminded as the usual romantic young poet's denunciations of war or commerce, it has a vague, floating, lyric sense of dread which goes beyond the simpler effects of horror movies that don't make intellectual claims. Franju's approach is almost as purified and as mystic as Bresson's. The story is about a surgeon (Pierre Brasseur) who, in systematic experiments, removes the faces of beautiful young kidnapped women and tries to graft them onto the ruined head of his daughter (Edith Scob). He keeps failing, the girls are destroyed, yet he persists, in a terrible parody of the scientific method. In the end, the daughter—still only eyes without a face—liberates the baying hounds on which he has also been experimenting, and they tear off *his* head. The film is both bizarrely sophisticated (with Alida Valli as the mad surgeon's mistress, doing the kidnapping in a black leather coat) and ridiculously naïve (in its plot elements). With Juliette Mayniel as Edna, and François Guérin as Jacques, and Claude Brasseur. The cinematography is by the great Eugen Schüfftan; the music is by Maurice Jarre; the superb gowns are by Givenchy. From Jean Redon's novel; Claude Sautet was one of Franju's troupe of co-writers. In French.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Aug. 20.)

Field of Dreams—Doggerel emotion. Kevin Costner, a New Age farmer in Iowa, longs to be reconciled with his dead father, a minor-league baseball player whose outlook he had rejected in the sixties. He hears a whispered command to build a baseball field, and when he does the spirits of Shoeless Joe Jackson (Ray Liotta) and the other White Sox who were barred from baseball for life after the 1919 World Series scandal arrive and play regularly. This is only the beginning of the hero's mystical encounters. That the film is sincere doesn't mean it's not manipulative; when the weepers in the audience start up, you may feel like a pariah if you're not moved. Adapted by the writer-director Phil Alden Robinson from W. P. Kinsella's 1982 novel "Shoeless Joe."—P.K. (5/1/89) (Cinema 3.)

Four Adventures of Reinette and Mirabelle—Eric Rohmer's latest picture doesn't belong to his "Comedies and Proverbs" cycle, and it isn't the beginning of a new series, either. It's not much of anything, actually—just a quartet of sketches about a country girl (Joëlle Miquel) and a city girl (Jessica Forde). Most of it was shot, in 16 mm., while Rohmer and his crew were waiting to film the "green ray" effect for his 1987 "Summer"; this movie was conceived as a diversion, an agreeable time killer, and it's very, very slight. The first episode, "The Blue Hour," which takes place in the country, is the most satisfying: an elegant little essay on natural sounds and the value of silence. The remaining three—set in Paris, where Reinette and Mirabelle share an apartment—are no more than anecdotes: casual, graceful, and utterly trivial. The movie is almost weightless, yet it has its own brand of airy integrity. Rohmer respects his characters and their sometimes peculiar ideas; every argument is permitted to run its course, and we're free to find it silly or profound. Also with Fabrice Luchini, Philippe Laudenbach, Marie Riviere, and Béatrice Romand. Cinematography by Sophie Maintigneux; sound by Pierre Camus and Pascal Ribier. In French.—T.R. (Lincoln Plaza.)

The French Lieutenant's Woman (1981)—Meryl Streep gives an immaculate, technically accomplished performance as Sarah Woodruff, the romantic mystery woman of John Fowles' novel, but she isn't mysterious. We're not fascinated by Sarah; she's so distanced from us that all we can do is observe how meticulous Streep—and everything else about the movie—is. Harold Pinter, the famed compressor who did the adaptation, has emptied out the story, and the director, Karel Reisz, has scrupulously filled in the space with "art": every vocal inflection is exact, the 1867 settings seem flawless, and the cinematographer Freddie Francis's camera movements and muted colors are superbly elegant. The result is overblown spareness. It's all so controlled that everything seems to be happening punctually, even in the interpolated modern story about the actors who are performing in a movie version of the Fowles book. There are some lovely moments, and a few have magical overtones, but most of the picture might be taking place in a glass case. With Jeremy Irons, Lynsey Baxter, Hilton McRae, Leo McKern, Patience Collier, Charlotte Mitchell, Penelope Wilton, and David Warner.—P.K. (Cinema Village; starting Aug. 23.)

Ghostbusters II—Surprisingly, it's more enjoyable than the first "Ghostbusters." It's a big comedy, but it's light on its feet, and the throwaway jokes are weightless—they *ping!* and dissolve in the air. You can't remember what you're laughing at, but you feel great. The script, by Harold Ramis and Dan Aykroyd, is a floating crap game, like the scripts for the Hope and Crosby "Road" pictures. Bill Murray holds it together, and assorted comedians—Sigourney Weaver, Rick Moranis, Annie Potts, Ernie Hudson, Peter MacNicol, Cheech Marin, Harris Yulin, Ramis & Aykroyd—come in and out of the scenes, dropping one-liners. The comic premise is that the collective angry energy of Manhattanites is feeding an underground river of boiling slime, which is swelling; our bad vibes are literally destroying the city. Directed by Ivan Reitman; cinematography by Michael Chapman.—P.K. (7/10/89) (Plaza. . . . ¶ Warner; through Aug. 15.)

Honey, I Shrunk the Kids—A contraption invented by a suburban nerd scientist (Rick Moranis) cuts both his kids and the neighbors' down to size: a quarter of an inch. Unaware of what has happened, and unable to hear their pipsqueak cries, Dad sweeps them into a dustpan, dumps them in a garbage bag, and hauls the bag out to the curb. The kids have to make their way back to the house across the (not very recently mowed) lawn—a long trek for tiny, tiny legs. There are adventures, of course, engineered by the sort of special-effects "magic" that probably even the youngest audiences have learned by now to dread. The real surprise of this movie—which was directed by Joe Johnston, an effects specialist from Industrial Light & Magic, and which carries an immense list of technical credits (including a "Scorpion Crew," a "Bee Sequence Crew," and a "Stop Motion Ant Crew")—is that it's friendly, good-humored, and unpretentious. Johnston manages to scale down not only the kids but also the movie's sense of its own importance. Also with Matt Frewer, Marcia Strassman, and Kristine Sutherland; Jared Rushton, Amy O'Neill, Thomas Brown, and Robert Oliveri are the kids. The imaginative cinematography is by Hiro Narita—T.R. (Loews Tower East. . . . ¶ Embassy; through Aug. 15. . . . ¶ Embassy 1; starting Aug. 16.)

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade—This mediocre third film in the Indiana Jones trilogy—a reprise of the first, "Raiders of the Lost Ark"—is a mixture of cliffhanger and anti-Nazi thriller and religious spectacle. It's enjoyable, but familiar, and the action lacks the exhilarating, leaping precision that the director, Steven Spielberg, is famous for. The only real spin is in the slapstick teamwork of Harrison Ford, as the archeologist-adventurer Indy, and Sean Connery, as Indy's father, a medievalist who's too engrossed in his studies to pay much attention to his daredevil son's triumphs. With River Phoenix playing Indy as a boy. The screenplay, by Jeffrey Boam, is based on a story devised by the producer George Lucas and Menno Meyjes.—P.K. (6/12/89) (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Eastside Cinema, and Embassy.)

Lethal Weapon 2—Chases, explosions, fights, barrages of insults, the odd moment of manly sentimentality—these are the standard elements of American action movies in the eighties, and the "Lethal Weapon" movies use them with an amazing lack of shame. There's lots of comedy, but no real relief: the punch lines slam into our brains like cars into plate-glass windows. The only thing that makes this movie at all distinctive is its hero, a reckless L.A. cop named Riggs, a role that allows Mel Gibson to zip through the picture like a free electron. Riggs isn't actually trying to kill himself this time (as he was in the first movie), but he's still a wild man and Gibson is still having a great time playing him. It's a mischievous, sprightly performance: he treats the action sequences as if they were slapstick routines. (Unfortunately, the director, Richard Donner, doesn't have as light a touch.) Danny Glover plays his partner, Murtaugh, an easygoing, conservative black family man; he's mostly called upon to react with horror to Riggs' dangerous antics, and the joke of their relationship gets a little tiresome. (The effect, sometimes, is of a white guy doing heroic stuff while his black pal shuffles along beside him. Glover, a good actor, deserves better.) Joe Pesci does small wonders with his supporting role as a ferrety, motor-mouthed money launderer, and Joss Ackland glowers like Alastair Sim as the head villain, a South African diplomat who smuggles drugs. Also with Patsy Kensit. Jeffrey Boam wrote the screenplay. The score is by Michael Kamen, Eric Clapton, and David Sanborn.—T.R. (Sutton, 8th St. Playhouse, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and West Side Cinema.)

Les Liaisons Dangereuses (1959)—Valmont and Juliette, the eighteenth-century characters in the Laclos novel, are former lovers who, writing to each other about their strategies, targets, and fresh conquests, turn love into something as studied and calculated as war. They take the love out of love. Modernizing the story, director Roger Vadim ties things up rather neatly by having Valmont (in a tired, too-sweet performance by Gérard Philipe—his last) and Juliette (Jeanne Moreau at her ravaged best) married. In Laclos the pleasure seems to be in carrying out the plan, achieving the victory—a triumph of austere, rational conquest; in Vadim's version a sensuous aura surrounds and permeates the objects. The first scene of Marianne (Annette Stroyberg) in the snow, her mouth open in laughter for a romantic eternity, isn't on a much higher level than the *Playboy* bunnies of the month; Vadim uses sex and jazz all mixed together in a cheap and sensational way that was probably exotic for the French in the fifties. But, using these elements, he attempts to give them a rhythm and feeling that are, at least, unusually high-class commercialism. In French.—P.K. (Quad Cinema.)

Nights of Cabiria (1957)—Possibly Federico Fellini's finest film, and a work in which Giulietta Masina earns the praise she received for "La Strada." The structure is a series of episodes in the life of Cabiria (Masina), a shabby, aging, dreamy little Roman streetwalker—a girl whose hard, knowing air is no protection against her fundamental gullibility, which, we finally see, is her humanity and her saving grace. A famous actor (Amedeo Nazzari) picks her up and takes her to his luxurious villa; she goes to a cheap vaudeville show, and when the magician hypnotizes her, the innocent dreams of her adolescence pour out; a young man in the audience (François Périer) meets her and proposes to her, etc. Though the film seems free and almost unplanned, each apparent irrelevance falls into place. (It was the basis for the Broadway musical—and the movie musical—"Sweet Charity.") In Italian.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; Aug. 20.)

Parenthood—The script, by Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel, is ambitiously constructed, tracing the relationships of several boomer-age parents with their kids, their siblings, and their own parents. The advantage of this arrangement is that none of the characters are onscreen very long: we have time to get sick of only about half of them, and some—especially the nervous, eager dad played by Steve Martin—are fun to watch. The drawback is that the movie has no drive. The dull title captures the tone precisely: the whole thing has been conceived generically, abstractly, and by the end the director, Ron Howard, is rushing from scene to scene tidying up loose ends, to make sure that each little individual drama gets its point across and that they all add up to a correct answer to the essay question "What is parenthood?" The mini-homilies consist of such startling bits of advice as "Give your kids some room" and "Watch out or you'll repeat your parents' mistakes." The movie tries very hard, but its wisdom is on the forlorn side. Also with Mary Steenburgen, Rick Moranis, Dianne Wiest, Jason Robards, Harley Kozak, Martha Plimpton, Keanu Reeves, and Tom Hulce.—T.R. (8/7/89) (34th St. East, Coronet, U. A. East, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and National Twin. . . . ¶ Baronet; through Aug. 17.)

Scenes from the Class Struggle in Beverly Hills—The script, by Bruce Wagner, from a satirical sex-farce plot he devised with the director, Paul Bartel, calls for something like the goosey stylized acting that Charles Ludlam perfected at the Ridiculous Theatrical Company, but Bartel has directed with his usual home-movies sluggishness. Two houseboys, a cynic (Ray Sharkey) and a romantic (Robert Beltran), who work in adjacent mansions, bet on which one will be the first to make out with the other's employer—one a divorcée (Mary Woronov), the other a widow (Jacqueline Bisset). The households include various siblings, offspring, and hangers-on (Arnetia Walker, Ed Begley, Jr., Wallace Shawn, Paul Mazursky, Rebecca Schaeffer, Edith Diaz, and others)—all of them libidinous or gaga. Arnetia Walker manages to bring in some zesty horseplay, and Bisset's amused calm is occasionally pleasant, but mostly this is just mistimed, failed camp, and some of the lines that are meant to be screamingly dirty-funny come out screamingly sour. (The sound recording is poor.)—P.K. (Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

sex, lies, and videotape—Steven Soderbergh's smooth, handsome first feature generates a fair degree of psychological tension out of next to nothing. It's a triangle drama with a cunning little kink in it. The triangle consists of Ann (Andie MacDowell), a beautiful young Southern woman who has "never really been that much into sex"; her husband, John (Peter Gallagher), a sleazy yuppie lawyer; and her younger sister, Cynthia (Laura San Giacomo), who's sleeping with John. The kink is an old college pal of John's, named Graham (James Spader), a soft-spoken drifter who comes to town and changes everybody's life. Graham has sworn off sex, because, he says, it's the only way for him to stay honest; he's impotent, except when he's watching one of his dozens of home videos—all of them interviews he has conducted with women about sex. He's like a retired gunslinger, a laconic hombre who won't pull his artillery out of its holster because he's seen too much killin' already. This is "Shane" remade as a Southern psychodrama. For all the movie's surface sophistication, it's as simple as a fairy tale and as naïve as one of those Cassavetes pictures in which everybody faces up to the truth about himself. But there's some real conviction in it—a mixed-up fervor that keeps us watching. Named Best Film at this year's Cannes festival; Spader, inexplicably, was honored as Best Actor.—T.R. (8/7/89) (Cinema Studio.)

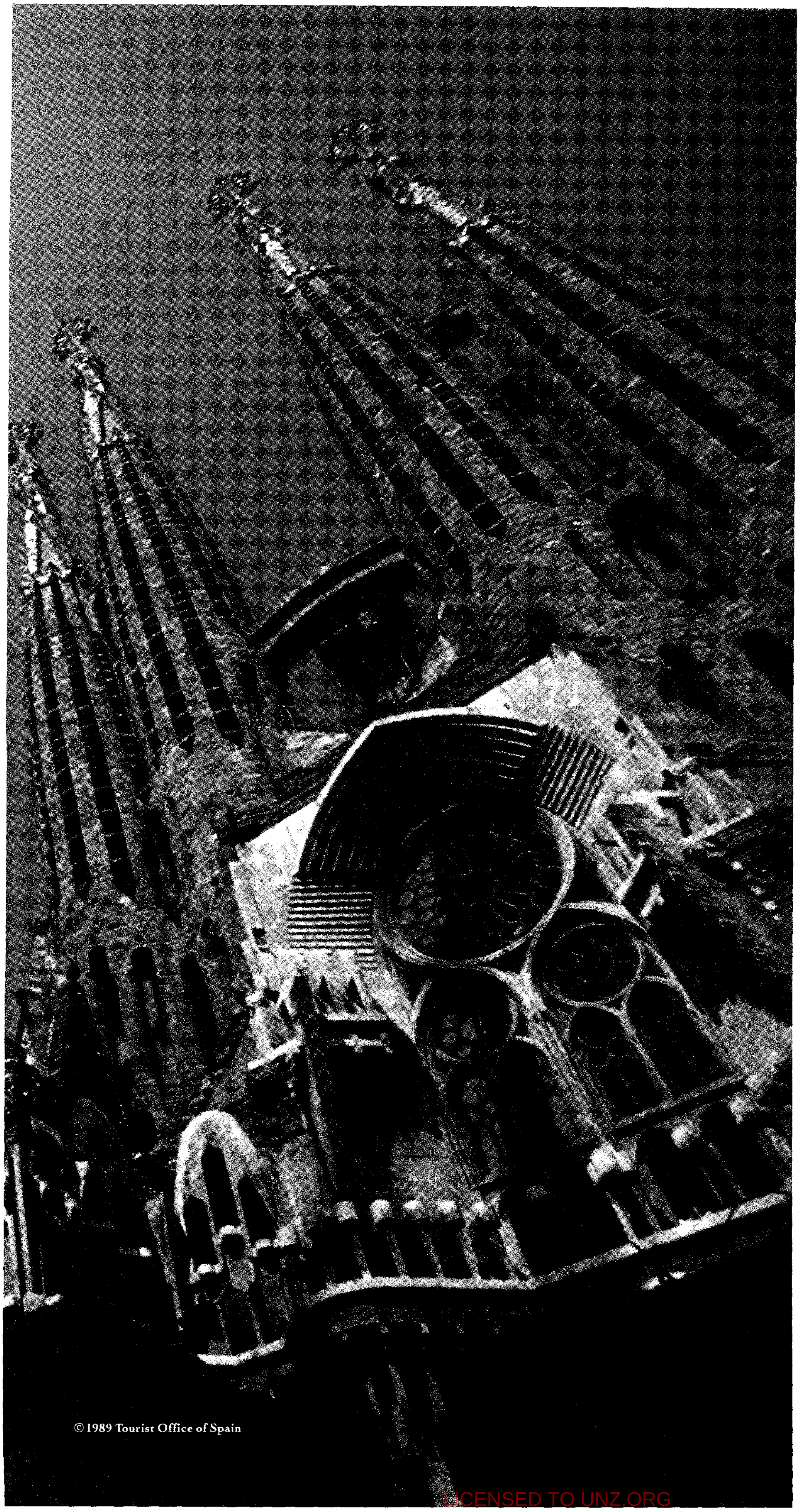
The Shopworn Angel (1938)—The material is shopworn, too; it's another version of Dana Burnet's play (based on his 1918 *SatEvePost* story, "Private Pettigrew's Girl"), which had been filmed in 1919 with Ethel Clayton and in 1929 with Nancy Carroll (who was lovely in it) and Gary Cooper. Margaret Sullavan manages to be poetically believable in the outdated role of the cynical, chain-smoking Broadway actress who is so touched by the adoration of an innocent soldier (James Stewart) that she marries him before he goes off to war. There are too many shots of Stewart, in doughboy uniform, looking yearningly at her, and her character reformation pulls the movie down, but Sullavan and Stewart always had a special rapport—a tenderness that seemed to allow for her hard edges and conflicts. (She always played the more complex role in their pictures together.) Produced by Joseph L. Mankiewicz for M-G-M, and directed by H. C. Potter, who creates the right sort of romantic atmosphere. The young Waldo Salt did the subtle screenplay—tart yet plaintive. With Walter Pidgeon as the rich man who has been "keeping" the actress, and Hattie McDaniel, Sam Levene, Alan Curtis, and Nat Pendleton. Margaret Sullavan's songs were dubbed by Mary Martin.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Aug. 17.)

When Harry Met Sally . . .—Rob Reiner's movie, from a script by Nora Ephron, takes a screwball-comedy idea and inflates it like a rubber raft. Harry (Billy Crystal) and Sally (Meg Ryan) meet in the late seventies, rub each other the wrong way, and then, after breaking up with their partners, become close friends; all the while, they're conducting a running debate on the question "Can a man and a woman ever be just friends, without sex getting in the way?" It's a Rohmer movie played as a sitcom. Instead of plot, Reiner and Ephron provide shtick: their style is a self-satisfied compromise between realism and hokum. Crystal muddles through amiably, but Ryan flounders: the filmmakers give her impossible, unplayable scenes, and all she can do is be adorable. The movie keeps telling us that it's real and truthful and universal. Everything in it seems false. Also with Carrie Fisher and Bruno Kirby.—T.R. (8/7/89) (Beekman, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Regency.)

Women on the Verge of a Nervous Breakdown—The most original pop writer-director of the eighties, Pedro Almodóvar is Godard with a human face—a happy face. The artificial is what sends him sky high, and the Madrid of this film is (as the closing song has it) "Puro Teatro." This is a movie where after a while you can't tell sexy from funny. Pepa (Carmen Maura), an actress who works in TV and commercials, turns on her answering machine and learns that she has been jilted. Infuriated, she dashes around, on spike heels, in a short, tight skirt, trying to confront her long-time live-in lover, the elegant, vain Iván (Fernando Guillén). The women of the title include Iván's early lover (Julieta Serrano), his new lover (Kiti Manver), and two (Rossy De Palma and María Barranco) who are involved with his son (Antonio Banderas). Sleek-legged and chic, they run the theatrical gamut. Cinematography by José Luis Alcaine. In Spanish.—P.K. (11/14/88) (Carnegie Screening Room.)

Collet

Giulietta Masina in "Nights of Cabiria"



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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

THE two most popular novels in America this summer have central characters who are Russians—Arkady, the hero of Martin Cruz Smith's "Polar Star," and Katya, the heroine of John le Carré's "The Russia House." Both are disaffected from their government, it is true, but neither is enthralled with the West, and both are indelibly Russian, and sympathetic precisely because of their Russian qualities. It's not really surprising that two Western writers have risen to this challenge, but it's startling to note that American readers have proved so ready to embrace Arkady and Katya. An enthusiastic interest in fictional characters does not come easily to the casual reader who does not have a preëxisting disposition. Interest requires curiosity and compassion, unless the characters are villains or buffoons and can give the reader a payoff in the form of an opportunity to feel superior. Up to now, that was the way most Russian characters in popular fiction were portrayed. So on the basis of the ease with which these two have been welcomed into this year's summertime reading—an activity that is not only voluntary but free of high-minded dutifulness—it seems that Americans no longer need to dehumanize Russians but are ready to be interested in them as people: so unself-consciously ready that readers don't seem even slightly jarred when they reach out from their hammocks for a book and find themselves drawn into the details of Russian lives. Details are the stuff of fiction. They either attract or repel. In this case, a willingness to find them appealing suggests that Americans are newly open to the Russian people.

The quiet pleasure we took in the acceptance of these two characters led us to remember that details are also the stuff of a humanistic perspective. Ambiguous and unpredictable, details undermine ideology. They are connective. They hook your interest in a way that ideas never can. If you let in the details of some aspect of life, you almost have to allow that aspect to be what it really is rather than what you want or need it to be. And yet details are also mysteriously universal. If fiction is news, it's largely news about the details of other lives, but if fiction has a vital interest for people, it's because in those details they somehow get news of themselves. The readiness to be interested in the details of lives unlike one's own is a profound measure of trust. Resisting details is usually an expression of xenophobia, of some insecurity or shyness, of a need to keep safely to oneself.

This matter of interest and details has another side, however. One has to already know something at the level of details in order to get involved with and identify with a people, and it is precisely this essential level of connective detail that a totalitarian government screens out. In the resulting blankness, a people's relationship with another people lapses into political abstraction—becoming, for example, "Communist China," a fixed image embellished only by tourist clichés. Given the lack in the American mind of a subsoil of details about life in China, it seems extremely unlikely that two novels featuring Chinese protagonists will be competing for the top of the American best-seller list any time soon. The student protest this spring provided an opening, during which images, personalities, and places we had never heard of poured in, laying down the beginnings of a subsoil. Then, when the crackdown came, these vivid details were blacked out, and we reverted to abstractions. Student leaders became cardboard heroes instead of tentative youths, and government leaders became villains, divested of their tragic dimension, and even of the individual differences that had been apparent during the crisis. Even the map went blank again as we heard no more about the provinces. This is how totalitarian governments come to be insulated from the world. This is how the world comes to be insulated from the humanity of people who live under a totalitarian system, and instead comes to be obsessed with the system itself.

Details from the Soviet Union have been flowing in for some time now. The map of that country, once an unarticulated landmass to most Americans, has been broken up into numerous subdivisions. Hitherto submerged republics have leaped out with singular, often discordant identities, and within the republics even more deeply submerged groups are surfacing: Azerbaijanis in Armenia, Abkhazians in Georgia, ethnic Poles in Byelorussia. Mongols, Turks, Tatars, and Persians have also emerged as part of the still unfolding complexity of the Soviet

Union. And as reforms proceed another kind of detail proliferates. We learn that the mayor of Kiev, the commander of the Northern Fleet, and the President of Lithuania, all Party candidates, have gone down to defeat in elections. We hear of landslide upsets by a renegade populist named Boris Yeltsin and by a thirty-one-year-old science researcher named Arkady Murashev who had campaigned for multi-party democracy. We learn that when voters were presented with only one candidate many of them expressed themselves by crossing out his name; as a result, some prominent candidates failed to achieve the required majority. This stolid, humorous device was used successfully in many parts of the Soviet Union, including the Siberian city of Tomsk. According to the *Times*, Tomsk is "not known as a hotbed of unrest"; nevertheless, a majority of the Tomsk voters crossed out the name of Vadim Zorkaltsev, a powerful Party leader there.

Zorkaltsev. Tomsk. Siberia. With such details is the soil laid down.

• •

Sweet

OUR *young friend who lives in the loft downtown has written to us again:*

One night not long ago, my wife and I woke up at around four o'clock to hunt for mosquitoes. We turned on the switch of the little Akari "light sculpture" on the night table, and as I stood on the bed, armed with a rolled-up copy of *ARTnews*, we both noticed that blood was dripping in sheets from the ceiling.

When I say it was blood, I mean that it looked exactly like the kind of stuff you find described in mystery novels and see portrayed in horror movies: something reddish-brown and thin and sticky—not the bright, rose-colored blood that bursts from a squashed mosquito but dark, claret-colored blood, the stuff that comes from deep inside a person. It was leaking down the wall around the heating pipe and turning into sinister-looking stalactites. My wife gasped, and asked if that could really be blood—what did blood *smell* like? As it happened, just before we went to sleep I had been reading an old John D. MacDonald mystery—a good one, with Bahia Mar, and a lot of deep thinking from Meyer—and had come to the bit where the broken body of the fragile young girl is found in the hold of the Busted Flush. "It smells metallic," I said, remembering the way Travis McGee described it. "Like copper. It smells like copper."

She sniffed, and said, "Well, what does copper smell like?" My trousers were thrown over the back of a chair, so I reached into the pocket and got out a penny, and we sniffed that, and then we tried to sniff what was coming out of the ceiling. It was hard to tell whether they smelled the same.

For the next two weeks, the ceiling kept hemorrhaging. Sometimes we would wake up and find it dripping—slowly, slowly. At other times, it would really come down, as though a whole new vein had been opened in the ceiling, or else as though—and this thought struck us both at about the same time—a new corpse had just been stowed away under the floorboards above. Our upstairs neighbors seemed like the last people on earth who would stow corpses under floorboards, but then the people who look like the last ones on earth who would stow corpses under floorboards are apparently the ones who sooner or later make a point of doing it. We thought of calling the police, of course, but we could imagine the cops telling us with a sigh that our "blood" was just some kind of familiar gunk you're supposed to know how to deal with—a kind of gunk that is just part of grownup life, like taxes.

It was beginning to bother us, though. Fortunately, a meeting about co-op conversion was coming up, and we decided to have it in our loft. We intended to confront our neighbors. On seeing the telltale blood, one of them might rise from his chair, like King Claudius.

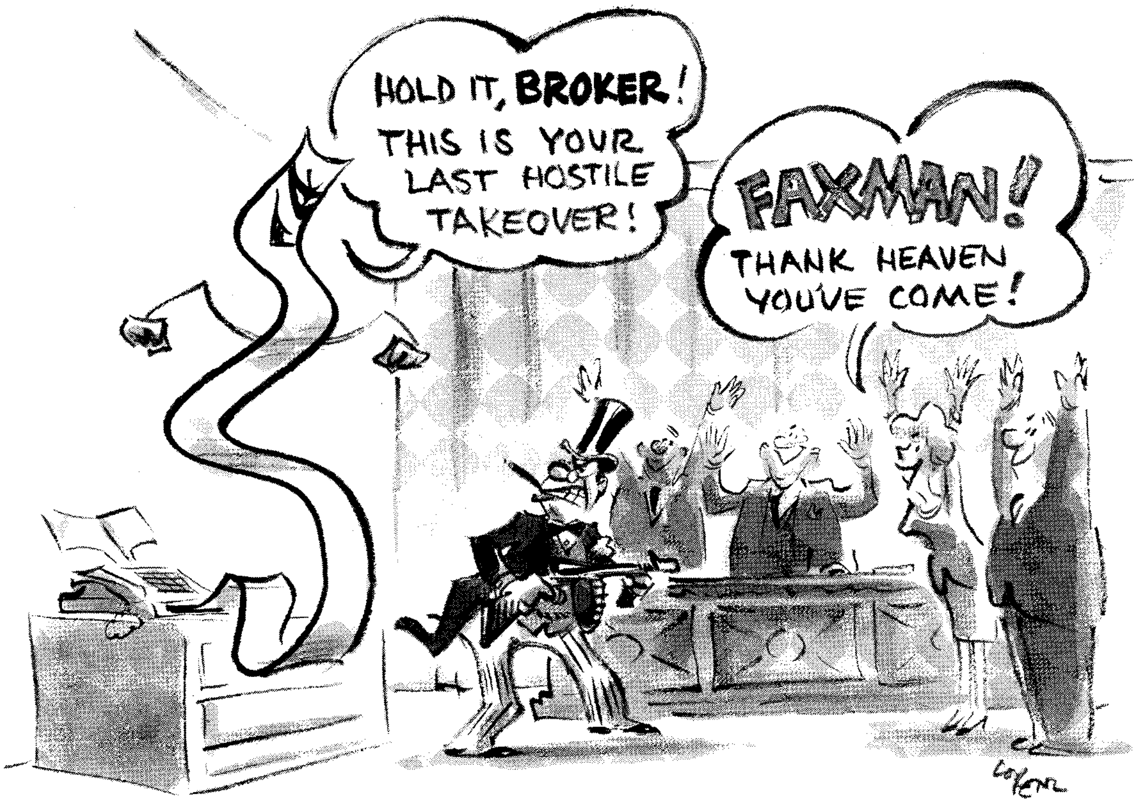
Our building is always going co-op and never getting there. For the latest round of negotiations we have hired a real-estate lawyer, who, like a movie star profiled in *Vanity Fair*, is tough and yet movingly vulnerable. His feelings get hurt easily. He had called the meeting to tell us how upset he was about something or other we had all done. Our neighbors came into the loft: Rachel, a painter of Expressionist seascapes, who lives on the sixth floor; Saskia, the sculptor who works in hay and dead fish, and lives on the fifth, just above us; the framer, Frank; the still-life photographer, Dick—the whole gang. Everybody sat down. Nobody seemed to notice the blood.

The real-estate lawyer talked about everything that had hurt him recently: our failure to sign no-buy pledges, our inability to agree on what we wanted from the owner. We all felt guilty and inadequate. The ceiling chose that moment to open up a new vein. The blood was dripping. Nobody said anything about it. Finally, my wife decided to deal with the issue directly. "Can anyone here explain why there is blood streaming from our ceiling?" she asked.

Rachel, the Expressionist, looked up at the blood. "That's not blood," she said. "It's just *molasses*."

We asked her what she meant, and she told us this story: "Mrs. Franz"—she's the woman who used to own the building—"warned me about it when I moved in, a decade ago. That the building had been a candy factory at the turn of the century, and that it still had odd oozes and memories. Anyway, one morning a couple of years ago I noticed that there were long, pale drips coming from the ceiling. They were slithery and small, like the forms in a Morris Louis 'Unfurled.' I got up on a ladder and stuck my finger out, and then I tasted the stuff. It was sweet, as sweet as can be, like the sugar you use in a buttercream—sweetness dripping from the ceiling. And then I thought, My God, this is it—sugar from the turn of the century! And I realized that when this was being boiled down, when they were making this right here in my home, I wasn't born, I didn't exist. It was thrilling, like the moment when they opened up the Dead Sea Scrolls and found them pristine. Sugar syrup from a century ago, bubbling out of the walls, and still so sweet."

As we all walked over to the little alcove where our bed is, Rachel added, "The thing that's really mysterious is why up on the sixth floor we have sugar syrup while down here on the fourth floor you have molasses."


HOLD IT, BROKER! THIS IS YOUR LAST HOSTILE TAKEOVER!
FAXMAN! THANK HEAVEN YOU'VE COME!

"I think it must be heated up by the pipes," our next-door neighbor, a cagey arts administrator, said. "It gets hot, and that turns it into molasses. Well, it's not really molasses, although we've called it that for years—this problem has been going on forever, since way before we moved in. What it really is is *caramel*. It caramelizes on the way down from the top floors to the basement. So down there, probably, there's a big puddle of caramel, like the base of a crème caramel."

I felt happy; I was living on the Big Rock Candy Mountain. But then Frank—the framer—pointed out that a vein of sugar syrup running through the walls probably wasn't so terrific from an engineering perspective. "It's a structural nightmare," he said. "Can you imagine the engineers' reports—what all that sugar is doing to the structure of the building? The way it's eating up the walls? It alarms me."

We all brightened; this might drive down prices, right to the bottom. (For the first time all night, our lawyer looked cheerful.) Everybody stood around for a bit looking at the syrup, like Vermonters at a sugaring off, and then said good night.

We were so relieved by this explanation that the strangeness of it didn't strike us until later. My wife shook me awake at two in the morning. "Why is there sugar in the walls?" she asked. "How did it get into the walls? Did somebody inject it in the walls? If this had been a widget factory, would widgets get into the walls and come tumbling out half a century later? What kind of an explanation is that?"

At four o'clock, she woke me again. "Why did she *taste* it?" she asked. "Would *you* ever taste that stuff? Isn't that the *last* thing you would do?"

So the next morning, before coffee, I called up Rachel and asked her why she had tasted it. "Oh, I was hoping it was sugar," she said. "I had been hoping to find it ever since I first heard about it, years ago. It was so pure, so abstract—so *refined:* the past coming back to haunt you, only still so sweet."

• •

T.L.C.

ANOTHER friend writes:

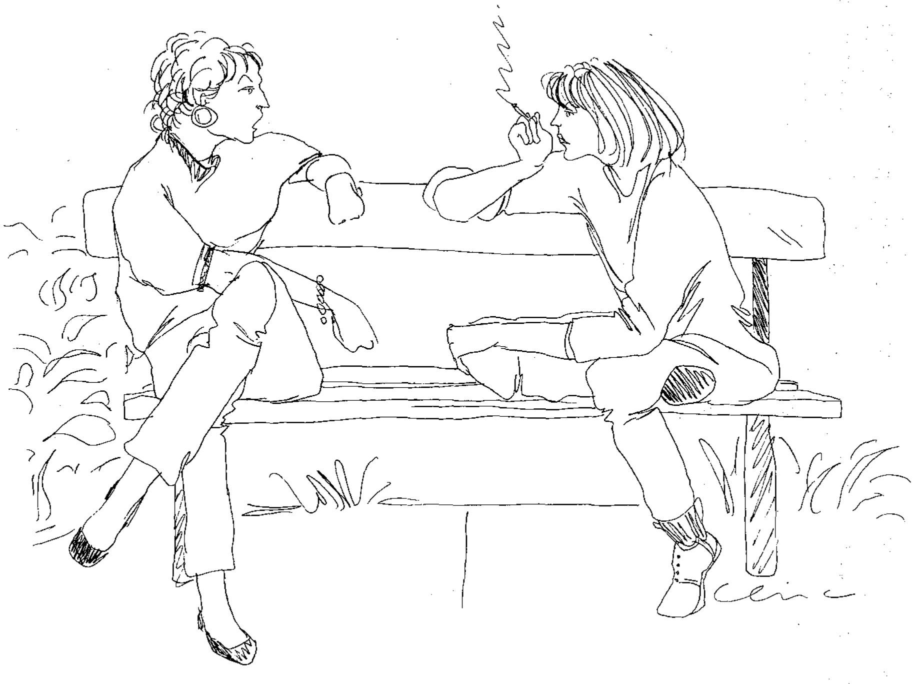
New York is full of signs, but making one's way through it can depend on more than reading them correctly. Sometimes it requires misreading them. I thought about this on a night earlier this summer when my family and I came out of a theatre in the upper Forties and were walking toward Eighth Avenue. We passed several "art theatres" featuring triple-X-rated movies, in which art is the last thing on anyone's mind, and at least one soda bar that featured egg creams, a delicious concoction containing neither eggs nor cream. Now we wanted a taxi. I hailed one, and it came right over, its medallion number illuminated and its "Off Duty" sign dark. According to the code of the T.L.C., the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission, this should have meant that the driver was prepared to take all those among us who were not drunk or disorderly anywhere we asked to go within the five boroughs, Nassau, or Westchester. Actually, one can never be sure that a "free" taxi in New York *is* free; one can only take hope from its advertisement of availability. The reality is that drivers are more likely to want to go in the direction the taxi is already headed, especially during the late afternoon or the late evening, when shifts change, and that they all too often question assignments they don't like, beginning with Harlem, and including the "outer"—non-Manhattan—boroughs unless one is en route to an airport.

To bring driver practices into line with the code by which they are supposed to operate, the T.L.C. has established a "taxi court," where, among other things, passenger complaints against drivers are heard and judged. It was to this tribunal that I repaired recently, along with the Eighth Avenue driver, because, upon being informed that my husband and I would be going on to Brooklyn after my parents got out at their midtown hotel, he had responded, "When we get to that hotel, you're all getting out, and no argument. No Brooklyn—I'm going *in*."

I had been to taxi court before. Once, several years ago, at midnight in a thunderstorm, I had asked a taxi-driver to take me to Brooklyn and had been thrown out of the cab on a rather desolate stretch of Varick Street as he explained summarily that he didn't have to take me anywhere. I had recorded the cab's medallion number but had neglected to get the driver's personal hack-license number on the dashboard, or to check that the face in the license picture was that of the driver at the wheel. When I arrived at the court, the driver—hair restyled, glasses gone, whole wardrobe renovated—informed the administrative-law judge that the taxi had been in the shop during the night in question, where any one of a number of people could have gained illegal access to it, and that he himself had been in another state. I had no evidence to the contrary—not even any way to testify to his altered appearance. The judge concluded that I had misidentified the driver, and dismissed the complaint. This time, however, I was prepared. I had the driver's name and the pertinent numbers. I had checked his features, one by one, against his photograph with the thoroughness of an immigration official. I was ready for him to clap on a wig, to dye or powder his skin, to plant an earring in his nose, or to show up in a dress and nylons. What I wasn't prepared for is what he actually did.

He arrived early—before me, and *I* was fifteen minutes early. He had shaved and was wearing a clean shirt, but had made no other effort to change his appearance. In the harsh overhead light of a little office into which we had been ushered for the hearing, I could see that he had a long, thin scar running up from his lip. He looked as old as I had remembered—early sixties—but, without late-night sweat and grime glistening on his skin, he also looked less robust. He laid a sheaf of trip sheets recording his fares on the desk of the judge, a young woman with a businesslike but not unkind manner. There were red checks on the sheets next to certain lines. "I go to Brooklyn all the *time*," the driver announced after being sworn in. "Where it's checked." She reminded him of the night in question. Then she swore me in, and I outlined my recollection of the incident. The driver pleaded not guilty. But he didn't deny that he had refused to go on to Brooklyn that night. Instead, he explained that he had then been working for eight hours, and his trip sheet backed him up. (I remembered that the night was hot, and that the cab had had no air-conditioning.) He said that when he saw me he was about to turn on his "Off Duty" sign and go home to the Bronx, where he would then be looking after his wife, who was suffering from a catastrophic illness. When we mentioned Brooklyn, exasperation overtook him—exasperation with himself for having chanced the stop. At that point in his narrative, the driver began to tremble. He took a vial from his shirt pocket and put a small white tablet on his tongue. While we waited for him to regain his composure, I asked myself questions: Was he really unnerved? Was that really a nitro pill? Had he brought in doctored trip sheets? I was feeling very hardened, very eighties, very New York smart.

He started explaining himself again. "That's right," he said. "I told them the hotel only—I was going *in*." And I realized that although I had jotted down his final sentence, underlining the emphasis, I hadn't mentioned it at the hearing. "I was going *in*." For some reason I couldn't put my finger on, the fact that he would independently recall his odd emphasis lent him credibility. I took his measure again. His voice had no anger in it, merely the stress to clarify his meaning. Suddenly, I believed in his tremor, in his stricken wife, in the exasperation he had felt that hot night. So did the judge. She explained to him that it was in his own interest to turn on the "Off Duty" sign before he pulled over to ask if a potential rider was "going my way" (permissible under the code). I was relieved when she judged him guilty not of the extremely serious, and costly, "213" ("refusing a fare") but, rather, of a lesser offense, related to proper signage. It took me a while, though, to figure out what had changed my mind. Why did I now believe that this New Yorker was telling the truth? It wasn't until I got home that it struck me. It was that, in the best New York tradition, he was at his sincerest in expressing the logical opposite of what one would expect him to say. He had been on his way home to the Bronx, away from Manhattan: he wasn't going *in*—he was heading *out.*

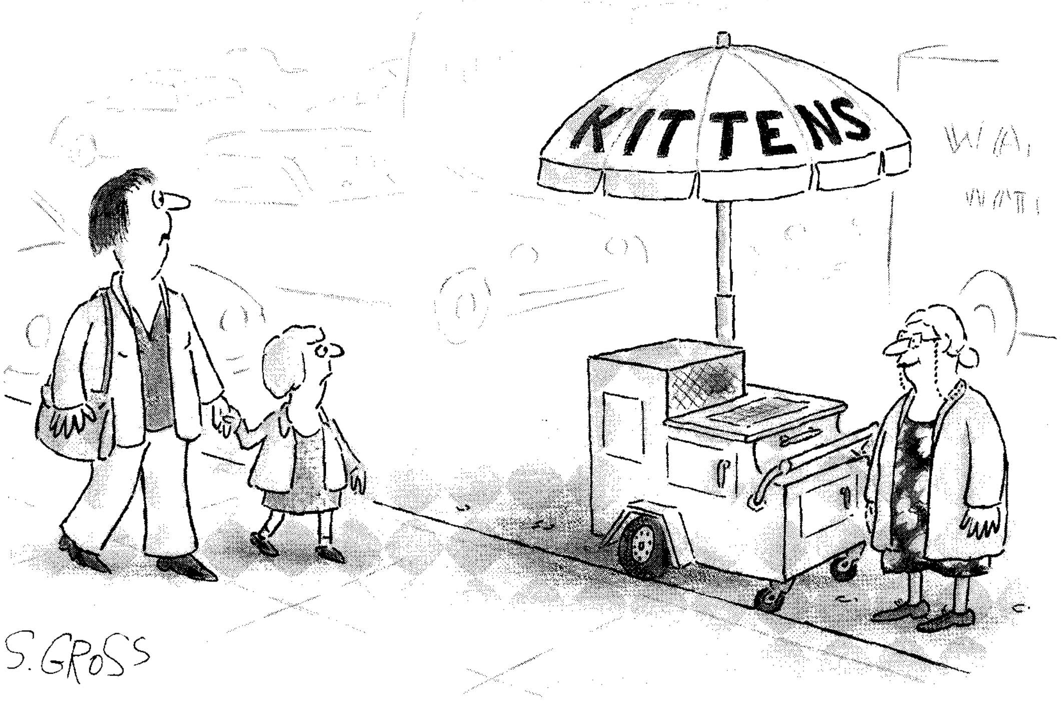


"He 'likes' you? What is 'like'?"

Gardel

IN 1935, at the age of forty-four, Carlos Gardel, an Argentine singer, composer, and movie star, died, at the height of his career, in a plane crash in Colombia. The day before the fifty-fourth anniversary of that event, the Amigos del Tango en Nueva York held a commemoration of Gardel in the Dag Hammarskjöld Auditorium, at the United Nations.

Though Gardel became a national hero in Argentina, he was born in Toulouse, France, the illegitimate son of Berthe Gardes, an ironing-woman. In 1893, mother and child immigrated to Buenos Aires, and he was exposed early to the musical form that was to make him famous and that he was to transform. The tango had been developing as a dance in Buenos Aires since the nineteenth century, but Gardel



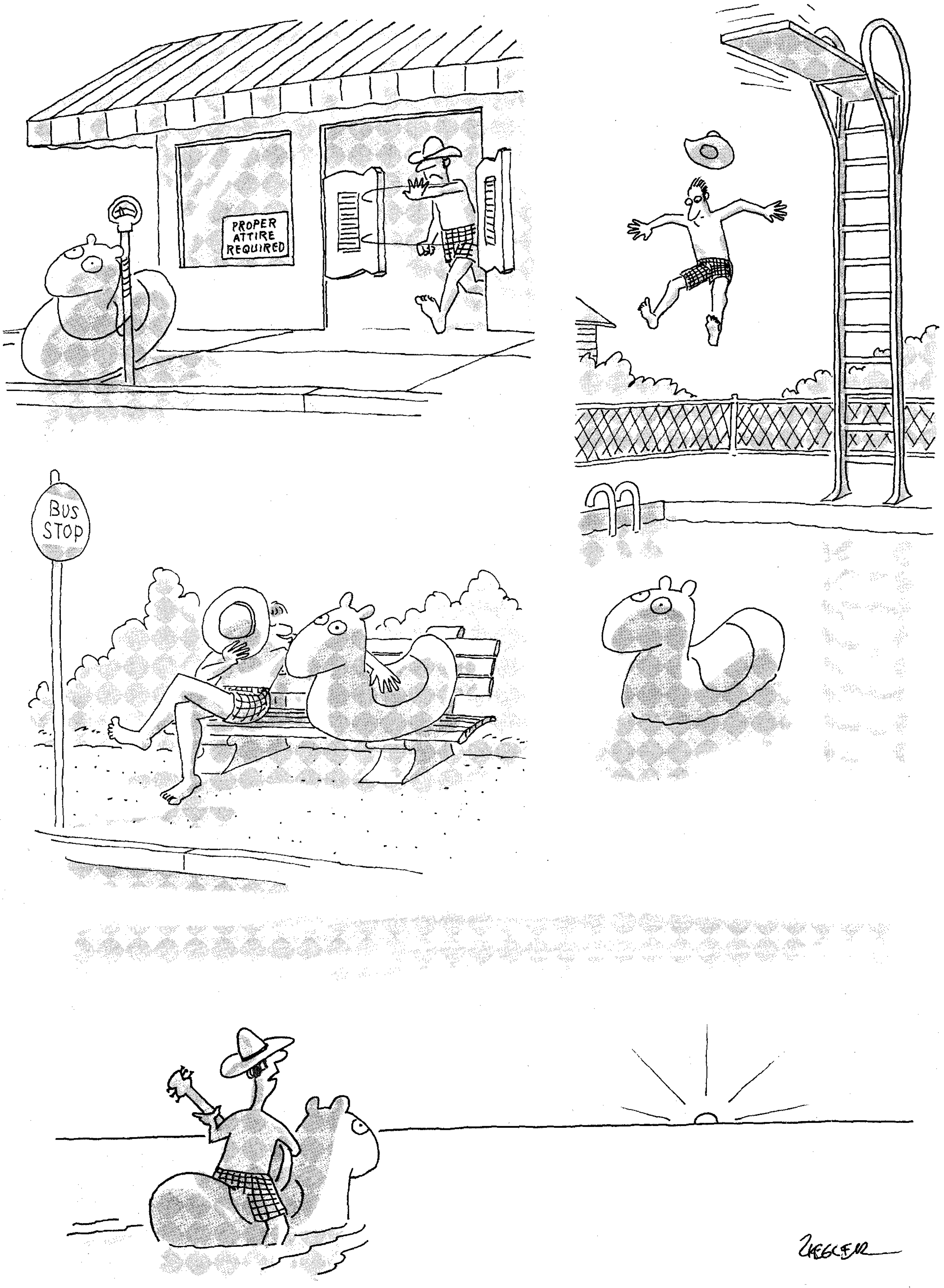
was the first composer to use the rhythm as a vehicle for popular song. As a result, he became, in the words of an English-language biographer, Simon Collier, "Latin America's first superstar of light entertainment." By the nineteen-thirties, Gardel had an immense reputation in the Spanish-speaking world, and a considerable one in France as well. Part of his success, to judge from the pictures of him that still hang in so many Latin-American restaurants, was attributable to his style: he looked good in a topper and tails, and he had an engaging smile. His main asset, however, was his voice: light, suave, and given to expressive, well-shaped phrases. At the time of his death, he was on the verge of success in America. He had done a series of broadcasts over NBC radio and filmed four Spanish-language movies in New York for Paramount. Hollywood had decided to try him out in the mainstream. When he died, a young admirer in Havana committed suicide, and one in San Juan tried. His coffin was sent on an international tour, to New York and Rio de Janeiro, before it went to Argentina. Even now, fresh flowers appear on his tomb in the Chacarita Cemetery in Buenos Aires every day; a lighted cigarette is often placed in the hand of his statue. (He was an incorrigible smoker.)

A chalk portrait of Gardel labelled "Presidente Honorario y Eterno" stood on a table at the front of the Hammarskjöld Auditorium. Nearly all those arriving for the ceremony were speaking Spanish. We sought out an English-speaking Amigo, and found one who told us he was a C.P.A. from Queens. The Amigos del Tango, which was founded in 1977, was at first entirely Argentine, he said, but when "Tango Argentino" came to Broadway, in 1985, Americans started to join; his guess was that the membership was now about half-and-half. We asked him why there are still people who admire Gardel. "He did everything," he replied. "He was like Frank Sinatra and Elvis Presley combined." Then he lowered his voice, as if to make a troubling admission. "I must say, he didn't dance a great tango. Though he did dance in several of his films." The thought of Gardel's having made the effort brightened him up.

The program was about to begin. The auditorium, which has a capacity of about two hundred, was full. On the stage were a few mikes and chairs and a grand piano, on the lid of which stood a white bust of Gardel—like the busts of Mozart and Beethoven that young piano students are given, only bigger. The piano was unlocked by a man wearing a burnous and a kaffiyeh. (This *was* the United Nations.) The first speaker was a short, elderly man, Abel Malvestiti, who was a founding member of the Amigos. He smiled as he spoke, in Spanish. (We noted the phrase "Alcalde Koch.") He was followed by Josephine Adams, another founding member, who delivered a tribute in English. "Carlos Gardel represented a glorious epoch of the tango in Central and South America, as well as France and Spain. He was a consummate artist, a friend to all. . . . a Latin American idol." Mr. Malvestiti then asked the audience to stand while an offstage guitar and accordion played a Gardel tango called "Silencio."

The man in the burnous, we discovered, was a member of the group that performed next—the United Nations Singers, whose dress included saris, djellabahs, and guayaberas. Then came musicians with more of the authentic tango pulse: an accordionist who had been in a band accompanying Gardel in one of his New York movies; a duo composed of a guitar and a bandoneon, which is a big, boxy concertina; and two more singers, a man and a woman. The lyrics poured forth in torrents; we caught the words *sueño* and *corazón*, uttered in tones of yearning or dismay, but the singers smiled good-humoredly as they finished their numbers. There was also a pair of dancers, he in a black George Raft suit, she in a silver fringed minidress and, at a second appearance, in electric-blue sequins. They treated us to the kind of slow slinking, punctuated by explosions of limbs, that we had seen on Broadway. (Because the stage was small, they had to be careful not to slink across the cord of the amplifier.) Each song and each dance was greeted with vigorous applause and many demands for encores. Then Mr. Malvestiti announced a memorial Mass for Gardel that night, in a West Side church, and another commemoration, in Jackson Heights, the next day. As we left, we wondered whether there would be Prince commemorations in Buenos Aires sometime late in the twenty-first century.

HARD RIDIN' WITH THE MONTAUK KID


PROPER ATTIRE REQUIRED
BUS STOP
ZIEGLER

READ CHINESE

STILL sleeping? Or just not out of bed yet? I wasn't gone long. You know, you can—you'll say you can't, but you can—read Chinese. Maybe not a book, but for sure a newspaper. In any language, a newspaper's a newspaper. You look at it, you turn the pages—you can tell which parts are the news and which parts are the ads. You can look at the photographs. The drawings. The border designs. You can figure out what's international, what's local, what's fashion, what's entertainment, what's sports, what's business. Some of the words you can read because some of them they don't translate. Some people's names they don't translate. So you have a bunch of Chinese characters and then you have a name like ROY ORBISON. Yesterday there was an article that was all Chinese characters except for ROY ORBISON, six times. So most names they go ahead and translate, but others they don't. And WOOLCO they don't translate. And THE SUNSHINE STATE they don't translate. Certain expressions they don't translate—KEEP FIT they don't translate. BYE-BYE they don't translate. Some words you think they would they don't translate. DOWNTOWN they don't translate. And SPAGHETTI and PASTA they don't translate.

THAT'S Chinese newspapers, but spoken Chinese—sometimes in the coffee and pastry shops here in Chinatown I mimic the words I hear, but very softly. If you do it, don't get too loud, because then it sounds like an echo, and people start looking around.

Chinese, spoken, is such a pleasing language. So many tones—it's like singing. Since I don't know what I'm saying, I never try to use those words when it comes my turn to order. I say, "One of those, one of those, one of those, one of those, and one of those. And one of those." All in one tone. Not so pleasing.

OH, you learn a few things in Chinatown. One thing is that you don't whistle. Because whistling in China is what the blind people there, the ones who massaged for a living, would do as they walked down the alleyways. Like the ice-cream man here, but whistling, not bells. And parents would send their children out to the alleyway to put their hands on the walking sticks of the blind people to guide them into the houses that needed their touch.

And in restaurants you learn. For instance, it means something if you're alone and order bird's-nest soup and the waiter smiles and says, "Good for you." If he tells you what it means when you're alone and you order it, you might change your mind on the soup, but some of the things he says you'll remember exactly: "And if you live in a house full of love you love the house. You love the bird that builds its nest under the eaves of the house."

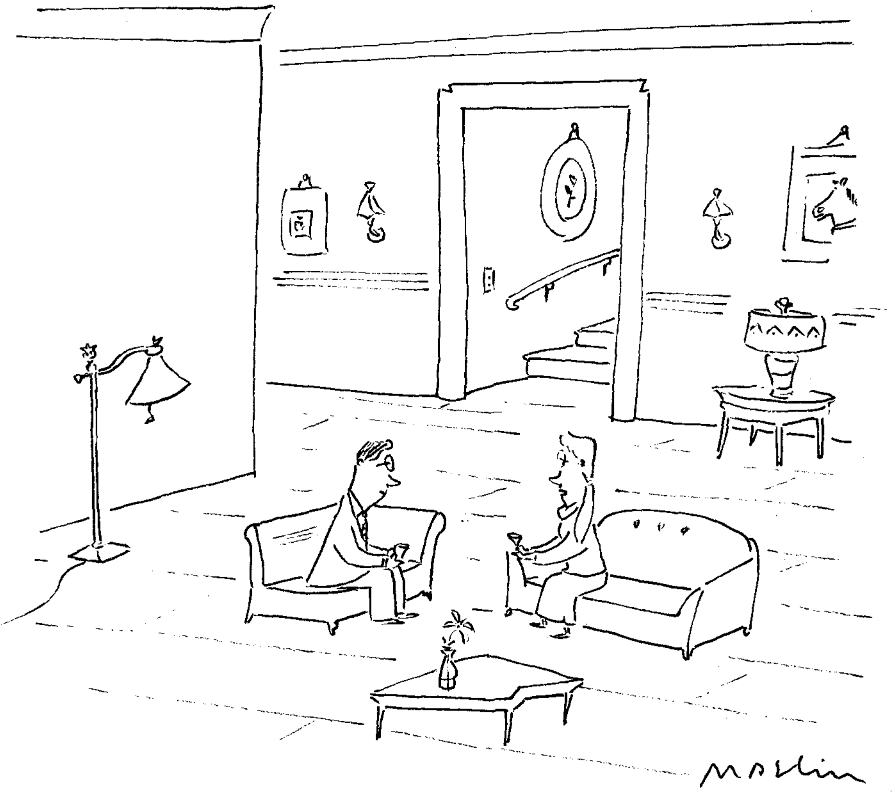
Do you have anything you want washed? The laundromat I leave my stuff at uses a Chinese kind of soap; maybe you noticed. When I'm in another part of town and I want to calm down, I just go and sit by myself somewhere. I don't actually shut my eyes—I just keep still until I can smell the soap in my shirt.

WHO knows, who knows how it will go? What you want, what I want, and so on. The Chinese seem to have fewer words than we do. Maybe they make every three words into two—so one word would cover "want" and "desire," and one would cover "desire" and "need." Roy Orbison, Roy Orbison, Roy Orbison, Roy Orbison, Roy Orbison, Roy Orbison—right now, that's all I can say.

Are you sure you're awake? Don't you like mornings? But it's O.K. for you to keep sleeping while I go out and come back like this. What's great about living in Chinatown is so many people getting up in the morning knowing what they want that I start wanting what they want. So this is coffee with cream and sugar. That's right, cream and sugar—don't you want to try some things that I like? I tried some things that you like. Some of them I liked. These are sweet rolls, all different kinds.

And because I know that the world really doesn't—at least not for long—go away, I picked up some newspapers. Three published here, two from Hong Kong. Let's see . . . here, start with this one. It's in—they all are, and now that you know you can, you can read Chinese.

—RICK ROFIHE



"Gee, Kevin, I don't know what to say. No one's ever told me I had tongue-and-groove flooring before."

JUNGLE VIDEO

LAST night, the neighborhood skunks invaded my dreams. They emerged from the dumpster at the restaurant where I used to work and followed me to my old apartment building—a black-and-white throng nipping at my heels. Their pointy faces snuffled my shoes as my ex-girlfriend said that she wasn't alone and I couldn't come in. Then the skunks wiggled with me down endless lonely streets to a soundtrack of electric guitars, garbage cans tumbling over, and a peculiar popping noise that turned out to be people trading small-weapons fire from the rooftops. And just now, when crashing sounds from upstairs woke me, it all made more sense than you want your dreams to make: in the full light of morning my bedroom reeks of skunk. The little beasts must have been rooting outside the house all night.

I wrap a pillow around my head, but it only amplifies the commotion above me. A man of average stature and need for rest, I live below the workplace of insomniac giants. Anita is six feet three, Dwight several inches taller. Their footfalls boom in the ceiling. Now they're knocking things over and screaming at each other.

I shuffle out to the kitchen in my robe. Someone has been down to make coffee. I pour myself a mug of it and head upstairs. All the second-floor offices are empty, so I push open the door to the big editing suite. The only light comes from the shimmering television screens and the tall racks of video decks and special-effects generators blinking against the wall: the hidden engines of Paradise Productions humming away in an old house on a working-class street in Boston. Nobody's here, either. The sounds are coming from the large attic-floor office overhead. I punch the intercom number on the telephone. The pandemonium stops and someone scrambles to answer. It's Dwight. "Why, Walter," he says. "How nice to hear your voice. Where are you?" Then I hear a loud grunt and the sound of the phone clattering to the floor.

After a minute Dwight gets on again. "Anita just tackled me," he says. "It's not a good time to talk. We're wrestling."

"It sounded like you were here in the editing room, right on top of my bed."

"We started down there."

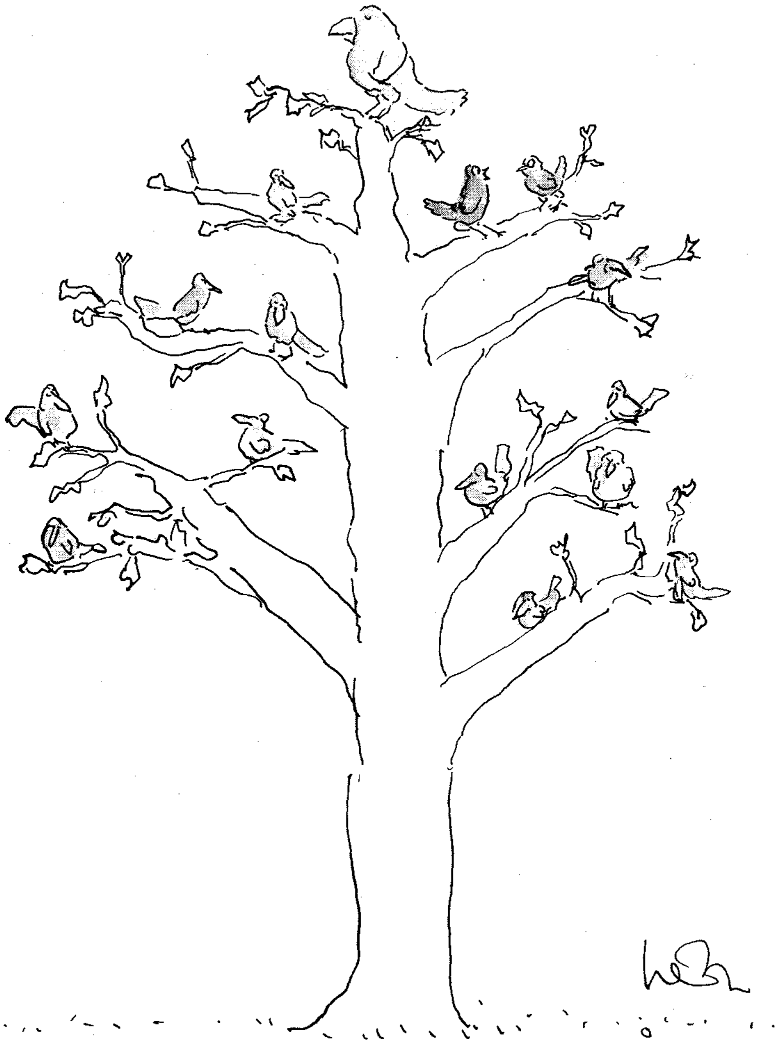
"You wrestled up the stairs?"

"Yeah. Can I call you back? I'm in a half nelson right now." He hangs up, and the crashing and screaming begin again.

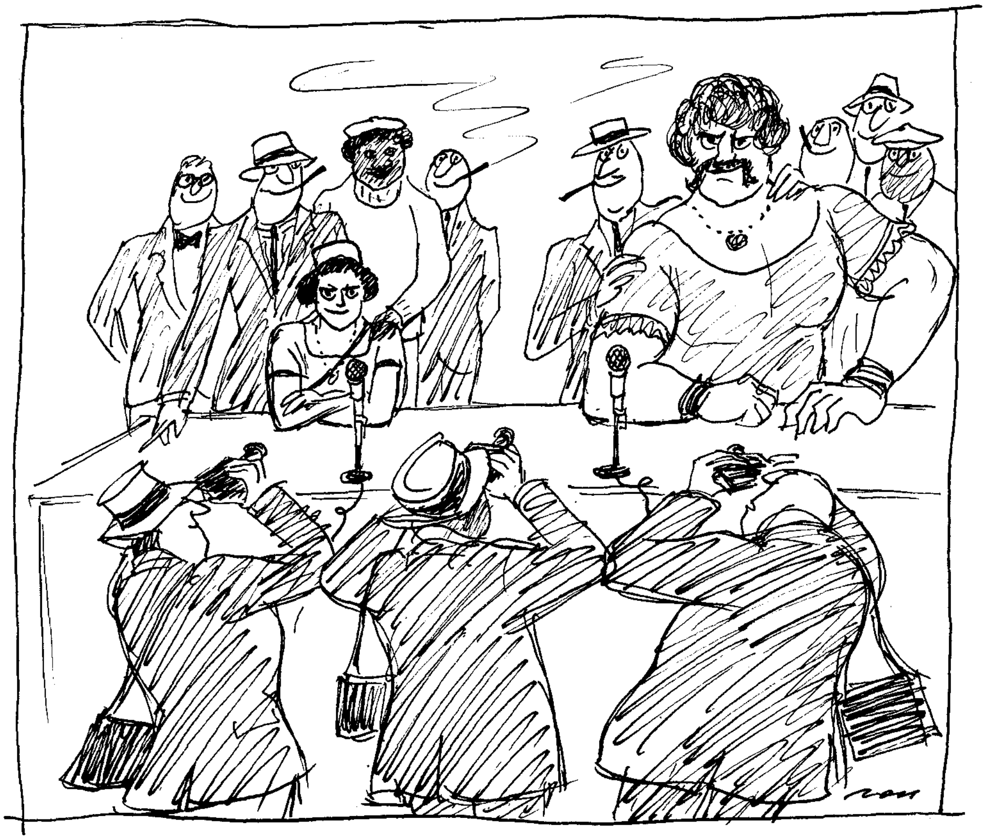
I look at the pictures flickering on the three color TVs above the editing table—faces and scenery we've been staring at all week, trying to get the first cut of a marketing tape ready for a big software outfit out on Route 128. A bowl of popcorn is on the video controller console, and stray kernels lead to the hot-air popper sitting on a stack of tape cassettes. As soon as I see it, I remember the racket it makes—a sound very much like small-weapons fire. At the other end of the table, our script is glowing on Anita's computer screen. I scroll through, up and down, and I find long passages of voice-over narration I've never seen. Sound bites we'd rejected long ago are back, whole sequences are moved to places we'd agreed were wrong, and most of the stuff I wrote is simply gone. All this since midnight, when I stumbled downstairs like a zombie.

They're playing music above me now, and throwing each other against the walls. I head back down to take a shower and shave. Even the bathroom—its one window sealed shut behind the shower curtain—smells of skunk.

Nobody knows why the skunk population exploded this year, but they've taken over this neighborhood. I was walking down to the corner store one night in early spring when I saw my first gang of them, four bad customers staking out a nearby yard. Coming home with my six-pack, I found three more at the curb, heads poked through holes in a garbage bag. They looked up when they heard me coming, lettuce shreds dangling from their lips, and stared me down until I crossed the street. Then they went back to eating. Since then, I've seen skunks every night, scores of them traipsing through yards and working the gutters. We have our own family of four or five residing in tunnels be-


"The boss can see you now."

neath the unpruned shrubs; at twilight you can lean over the porch railing and watch them surface into our scrap of front lawn. We tell ourselves there's something wonderful about it—the natural world reasserting itself in the urban landscape.



DAVID AGREES TO FIGHT GOLIATH

• •

I get dressed and go back upstairs. When I reach the attic office, Anita and Dwight are lying beneath an afghan on the pulled-out sofa bed, their clothes in a heap on the floor. They wave to me. "You really have to meet my friend Rebecca," Anita says.

I pretend not to know what she's talking about. She's been saying this for months, and so far she has failed to produce any such woman. She turns to Dwight. "I want Walter to meet Rebecca."

"Just say yes," Dwight says to me.

"Don't you people ever sleep?" I say. "Didn't you go home at all? I heard popcorn popping in the dead of night."

"We might catch a few winks right now," Dwight says.

"Now? Dwight, the client is coming here at three o'clock."

"Oh, we're in good shape with that," Anita says.

"We are?"

When I left last night she called it a terrible crisis.

"Sure, we're fine. After you went to bed, the Doctor showed up, and we all got this huge burst of energy and just started ripping it apart. You should have been there. We put on music and made popcorn and got some really neat ideas. We changed everything all around. Wait till you see it."

Dwight yawns. "Actually," he says, "we still don't have that elusive thing they call the vision."

"That's true," Anita says. "But this is just the rough cut."

"Anita," I say. "We've been agreeing all week that it was working. We agreed it was fine."

She smiles, sticks her foot out from under the afghan, and pats me on the knee with her toes. "I did agree to those things," she says. "It makes you so sad when I don't."

ANITA and Dwight and the Doctor went into business for themselves because they couldn't work for other people anymore. True, a number of people couldn't work with them anymore, either, but that was just as well. They always had more offers than they could possibly take. They're practically famous. You've seen documentaries they've produced, news programs they've directed, public-affairs specials they've researched and written. But they always had to work when other people wanted them to work, and do what other people told them to do. After a number of years they wearied of it. And then, overnight, everybody needed a video to announce his or her essence to the world, and Anita and Dwight and the Doctor became a corporation.

Six months ago, on the darkest day of winter, I sublet the first floor from them, agreeing to share the kitchen and bath. For three years, I'd been living with Jeanette, across the river in Cambridge, waiting on tables and acting in any play I could find. Then Jeanette dug up a young law partner to take my place. She'd been unhappy from the beginning, she said, and that rocked me: next to her I couldn't act at all. After I moved here, I saw the video folks every day as they rambled through my apartment to get coffee or use the john. "Forget that woman, Walter," Anita would say whenever she drifted in or out. It became an incantation, and after a while it began to work. I did begin to forget. If I started to remember, I hung around with the busy, happy people upstairs. One night, while they screened some footage, Anita discovered that I could pick shots and write a script, and do it for not much money. I've been in corporate video ever since.

When I left Anita and Dwight on the sofa bed, I went down to watch the new version of our tape. Anita is a visual person. With the help of her partners, she'd snipped the logical threads we'd spent a week spinning out, and now we had twenty minutes of pictorial free association, cut to the music I heard in my dream. I made believe I was the client and I asked myself what I thought. "Are you people out of your minds?" I replied.

Now we're in the editing room, and Anita is talking to the television. "Steady up, Doctor," she says, twisting a knob to make the tape go forward and back, looking for a decent place to cut

THE MORNING TRAIN

In the same way that the sea
becomes something else the moment we
are on it with its horizon all around
us and its weight
bearing us up so a journey seems not
to be one as long as we are

travelling but instead we
are awake sitting still at a bare
window that is familiar to us but not
in truth ours as
we know and facing us there is a line
of socks hanging in the sunlight

over a patch of onions
blue in their summer luminous rows
of carrots the youth of lettuces to be
glimpsed once only
dahlias facing along a white-painted
picket fence beside a plum tree

at the side of a station
like so many into which the green
revolving woods pointing fields brief moments of
rivers bridges
clusters of roofs again and again have
turned slowing first and repeating

their one gesture of approach
with a different name out of the place
of names a clock on which the hour changes
but not of course
the day arrangements of figures staring
through the last stages of waiting

only there is nothing on
the platform now but the morning light
the old gray door into the station is
standing open
in a silence through which the minute hand
overhead can be heard falling

while a hen is talking to
herself beyond the fence and why are
we not moving what are we waiting for now
only the hum
in our ears continuing to tell us
that we have been travelling since

whatever day it was that
city with its tower and there was
the night with its iron ceilings echoing
couplings through the
shunted hours in the all-night restaurant
between trains then the socks begin

to slip away on their line
the garden swings softly behind its
fence and in a few hours when we think we are
almost home at
last we will look up through the pane across
a stony field plowed since we left

rusting at noon and the same
flowers will be leaning on the south
wall of the house from which we have watched the trains
pass and we will
see clearly as we rush by all of its
empty windows filled with the sea

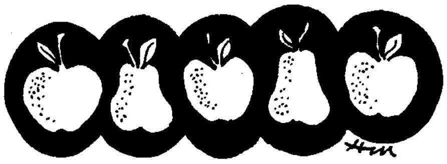
—W. S. Merwin

• •

into the shot. "Steady up, God damn it."

The Doctor himself shot the footage we're looking at right now. We call him the Doctor because he has a Harvard Ph.D.—anthropology: kinship patterns of cannibals or something. He's actually a decent amateur cameraman, but this is wobbling all over the place and going in and out of focus. It's a shot of many people sitting in an enormous room, busily using computers in a way that suggests roaring productivity and satisfaction. Happiness, even. We need a shot like this, Anita says, and she's right. We need it because our client's last software release contained enough horrific bugs to corrupt data bases all across the country. Heads rolled, we gather, at their new building on 128. But now it's all fixed, they claim, and that's why we're making this tape. In a few weeks they're bringing their biggest customers to town for a gala product-unveiling in a fancy hotel, where they'll feature the première of our video on a giant screen. So yes, of course, we need a shot like this. And we have plenty of them. Would Anita produce this assignment and not bring home a bucketful of such shots? But today she doesn't like them anymore. The light is wrong, or the angle is, or the people don't look excited enough. Something invisible to me bothers Anita about every one of the happy-user shots we already have.

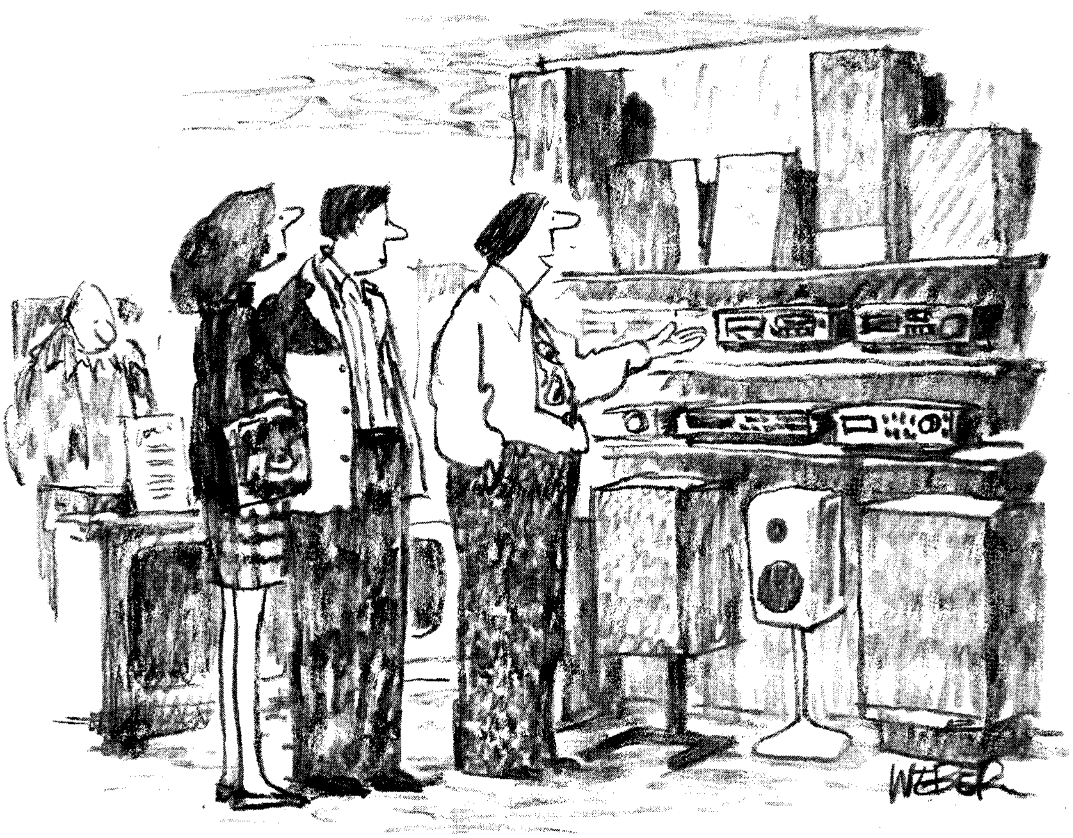
Instead she wants to use this one the Doctor took last week in Harvard Square while he was wandering around with the hand-held camera. He ended up in a vast basement at his alma mater where students were testing a new system to make computers do their homework.



I tell Anita, "This footage has nothing to do with our client's business or products. Using it would be misleading and unethical. It would be pure video trickery. We cannot use this shot, Anita, and you know it."

"I like the way it looks," she tells me. And then she says, "Now if only we had that perfect testimonial from a satisfied purchasing agent."

I turn my head to the wall and pretend to be deaf. Earlier this week, she got the idea of shooting me as this hypothetical purchasing person. Working me in as an actor is one of Anita's themes, like fixing me up with her friend.



"This CD player costs less than players selling for twice as much."

The intercom buzzes. It's Dwight. He wants me to come upstairs and talk to him. When I get up there he's sitting in his underpants at his computer, playing Phantom Flyer. "I'm at thirty thousand feet, and I just lost an engine," he says. "Not only that, my flaps are stuck. I'm going into a dive." On the computer screen the horizon line bobs up and down in the windshield of a jet cockpit. Finally it flies right up out of sight and the earth gets closer and closer. "This always happens," he sighs, leaning back and scratching his ribs until his plane hits the ground. We watch the colorful explosion together. "How about we go catch some breakfast?" he says.

"Dwight, are you crazy? I'm trying to help Anita fix this tape. I'm starting to think you have a self-destructive streak, Dwight."

He stands up and wanders over to the sofa bed. "I'm starting to think you're a worrywart," he replies, and begins to dress from the pile of garments on the floor. Dwight's taste in clothing is the stuff of legend. Today he's wearing the fruits of a recent sweep through Filene's Basement: pearl-gray over-the-calf hose decorated with flying yellow geese, and maroon Italian loafers. He puts on the shoes before he puts on his pants—the shoes being delicate enough, and the electric-blue rayon trousers baggy enough, to allow for that—and finishes with a pink T-shirt that says "Official Jamaican Bikini Inspector." Then he puts his arm around my shoulders. "Fixing this tape is beside the point," he says.

"Oh, really," I say.

"Yes. Would you like me to tell you why?"

"Sure. Tell me."

"First you show me those home fries and eggs. And that ham."

Dwight's favorite diner is called the Pig 'n' Poke, over by the railroad switching yards beneath the Mass. Pike. From our booth, I can see a blue Conrail locomotive pulling boxcars through a tunnel.

Dwight piles fried egg onto a corner of toast and raises it in the air. "The tape you made with Anita was perfectly competent," he says, and he pushes the toast-egg assembly into his mouth.

I should be having something wholesome myself, not the French fries and root beer I've ordered. But taking real nourishment seems out of keeping with my present circumstances.

"The Doctor and I admired it when we watched it last night," Dwight goes on. "You could find work all over town with a demo reel of stuff like that. You could stop working for us and go make the same boring video everybody else is making. Yak about something, then show a picture of it. Yak some more, show another picture. Yak, picture, yak, picture, yak, picture, yak."

"That's what clients think a video is, Dwight. That's what they want."

He folds a piece of ham in half. "The first thing to remember about clients," he says, "is that they don't know what they want. The second thing—this is the problem part—is that they think they do." He pops the ham in.

"What about the third thing?" I say.

"What third thing?"

"That a lot of money is getting spent, and it's their money."

"Wrong!" Dwight exclaims, pounding the table with the butt of his knife. The sugar shaker falls down and trickles a white mound next to the napkins like time running out. "Wrong, wrong, wrong. They signed a contract. That money belongs to us."

"Well, then the videotape is theirs."

"Nope, that's ours, too. We're its creators." He picks up the fallen shaker and streams sugar into his cup. Then he stirs it and has a sip. "Wow, that's sweet," he says. "The third thing about clients—the real third thing—is that if you let them, they'll start doing your job for you. But they don't know how to do your job, see? And so in the end they're disappointed and it's your fault."

"They probably wouldn't have been disappointed, Dwight. They probably would have liked it, and we'd practically be done by now."

"That's even worse. Then we'd have to feel bad all alone, knowing we took the cheesy way out. A household of hacks with only themselves for comfort." He motions to the waitress for our check. "No," he says. "What we have to do is correctly identify our job and then do it. Now, what is our job?"

"To make a videotape."

He shakes his head. "Anybody could do that." He gets up with the check to pay it. "Our job is to be the brilliant media wizards."

Outside, I stop at the passenger door of Dwight's white '64 Bonneville—it's the only car he can find that's big enough for him to drive—but he strides right past it and out to the highway. "Where are you going?" I say, but he refuses to answer me. I have to run through traffic to catch him on the median strip.

"We have some research to do," he says.

Across the highway is a shopping center with an amusement arcade. I follow Dwight into a dim, cavernous space full of flashing machines and teen-agers in T-shirts decorated with skulls and lightning bolts. The proprietor is behind the cash register in a dirty barber's smock. He waves greetings to Dwight, slaps a roll of quarters into one of Dwight's outstretched hands, plucks a ten-dollar bill from the other. Then Dwight leads me to a video game called Jungle Bungle. He taps the screen with his fingernail. On it is a list of the highest scores. Dwight's initials are two numbers from the top, next to yesterday's date.

"Yesterday? I thought you were out on a shoot yesterday."

"I was," he says. "But I must have had some free time." He puts two quarters in the machine. "O.K., I'd like to hear a little meditation on computer software."

"I can't work this way, Dwight."

"We're falling on our faces with a big client today, bud, and you're the writer on this project."

He begins to play the game. The star of Jungle Bungle is an animated ape whose great joy in life is bananas. The player moves a joystick to make the ape run around and collect bananas and put them in a sack. At first it's easy—the yellow fruit is simply lying on the ground or hanging in bunches low in the trees. A few flicks of the joystick and Dwight has every banana there is. Then the machine plays a little tune and a new landscape slides into view.

"Insights?" Dwight asks. "Inspirations?"

"Dwight, this is totally irrelevant."

"How can you say that?" he says. "What about our client's sacred product? Isn't it the same thing? You travel around in a kind of environment and play with information—take a piece from here and move it over there. You know where they got that idea?"

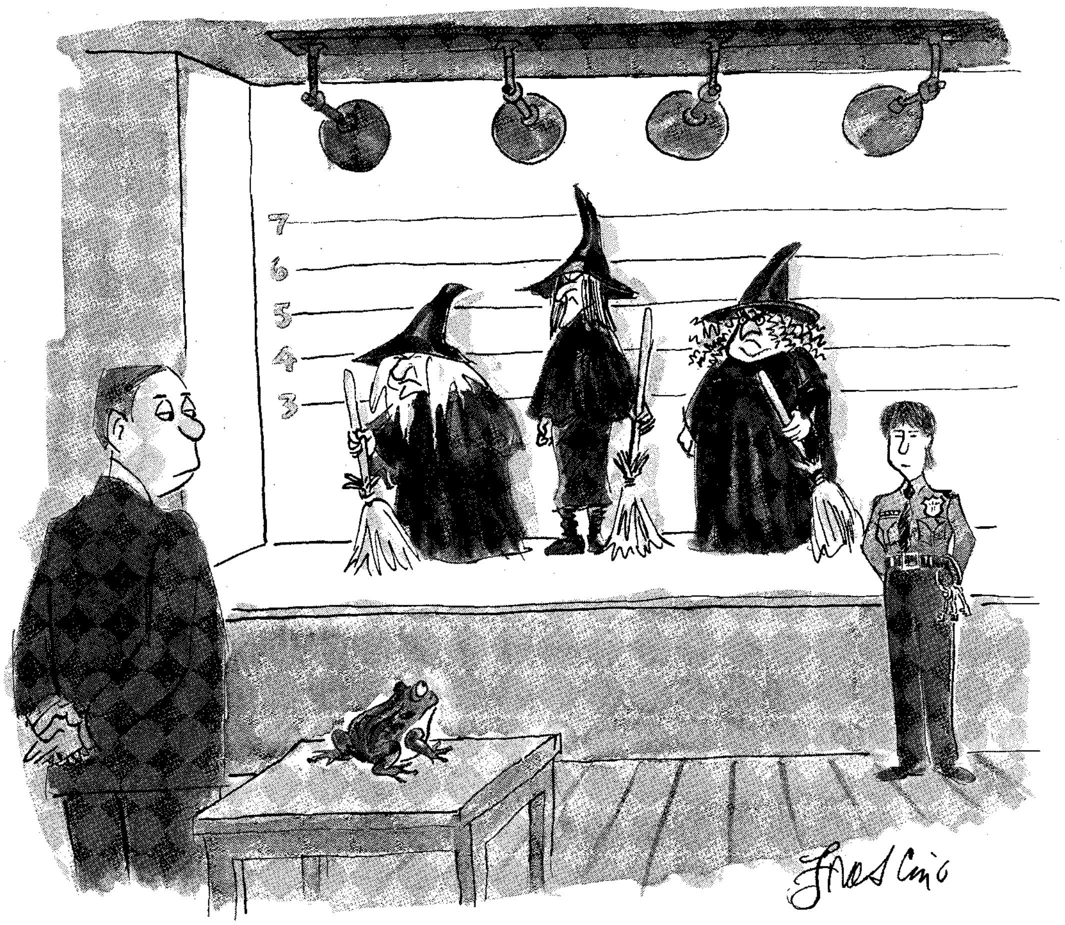
"No."

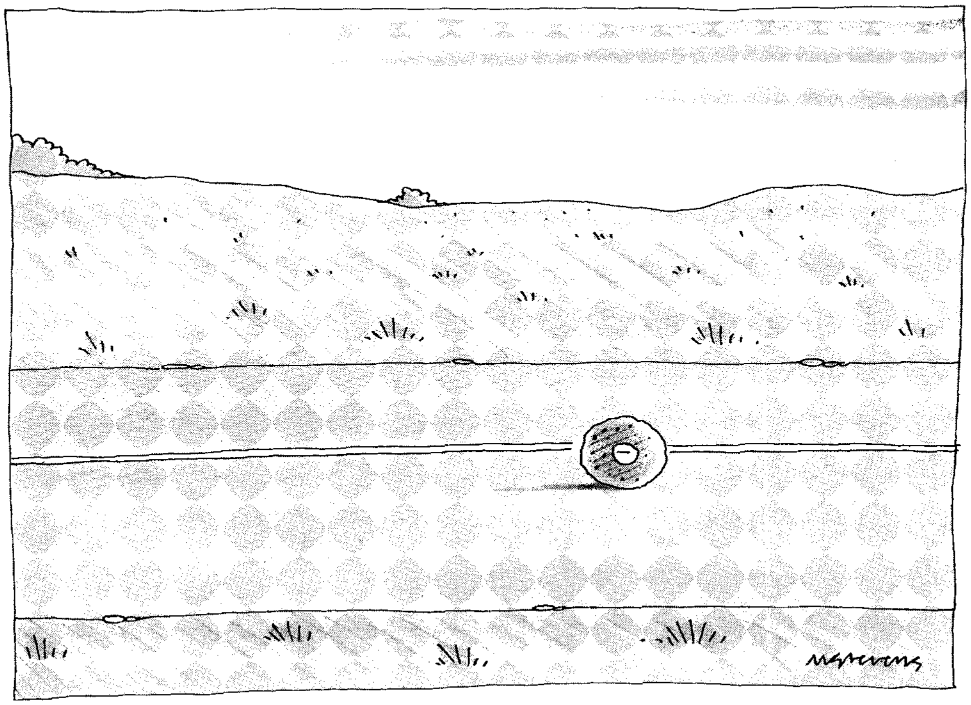
Dwight's ape is now hunkering on the bank of a wide, fast-moving river.

"From ancient computer games," he says. "The ones the programmers played on the mainframes when they were college kids. You think it's gonna stop there? Five years from now, business software will look just like Jungle Bungle. Trust me. The future always arrives as a game."

A riverboat appears with a magnificent freight of bananas. The ape clambers down to the water's edge to swim to the boat, but the black, humpy backs of many crocodiles surface in the river, and he scurries back up the bank. Then Dwight makes his move. He runs to the water and leaps right onto the nearest crocodile. When it turns around to bite him, Dwight bounds to the next and then the next, and in this way he makes it all the way to the boat, grabs the bananas, and, vaulting from monster to monster, comes all the way back. "First time I tried that I got eaten," he says happily.

Jungle environments come and go, with Dwight ingeniously racking up banana points. It's not until the eighth or ninth landscape that he finally makes a mistake, opening the wrong door in a temple full of fruit. Then it's my turn. Immediately, little monkeys in the trees drop coconuts on me and knock me out. Dwight's turn again, and he zips through the landscapes even faster than before. "The ape has to learn certain things," he





THE BLUEBERRY BAGEL, HAVING TRIUMPHED ON THE EAST COAST, HEADS WEST.

• •

says, "or he doesn't get to the next level of the game. But, of course, saying 'The ape has to learn' is like saying the computer 'knows' this or that."

"It's you who have to learn certain things."

"You bet. But in seeing it as the ape's situation you get this peculiar distance on yourself."

"It becomes something apart from you," I say.

"*You* become something apart from you."

"You become the ape."

"Yes!" Dwight says.

We return from the amusement arcade to find a metallic-khaki BMW sitting in the drive. Dwight runs the Bonneville up onto the curb, jumps out, and dashes onto the porch and into the house. Even from outside I can hear him slamming upstairs in his usual way, three steps at a time.

"And here's Walter!" Anita says when I step into the editing suite. "Walter's our writer. He wrote this script."

"Oh," the clients say, "the writer," and they shake my hand—two men and a woman about my age. They're all wearing gray business suits, but it's easy to pick out the alpha male. He shakes my hand much harder than the beta male does, talks like a drill sergeant, and shoots laser eyebeams into my face. The beta male has an open, friendly nature—a classic beta trait.

The Doctor has been teaching me the theory of creatures in groups. He's a scholar of such things, and it seems to serve him well. He winks at me from across the room. The Doctor himself is an alpha male, but a special breed whose alpha strategy is to pretend that he isn't.

Anita has polished up the golden Emmy statues and arranged them on a shelf above the editing table. I nudge her over there with my hip. "I didn't write one word of this and you know it," I whisper. She gives my ribs a little squeeze. "It's showtime!" she announces, handing out yellow legal pads.

We settle into the expensive office chairs, and she lets the video roll. A helicopter shoots the company's headquarters at dawn, we go inside for a vérité-like tour, programmers have lunch in the cafeteria and say mysterious things, the employee volleyball team plays a game to some tasty electric jazz. I hear furious scratching on the legal pads. Five minutes in, the alpha male wants Anita to stop the tape.

"No stopping," she says. "It breaks up the flow."

I should be thinking about damage control, but instead I'm thinking that Anita's talents are as wasted on corporate P.R. as they were on documentaries. She's more like the queen of video rock and roll. Her ending is a great scene of software people at their terminals arguing about the best place to get Chinese food. Then the screen goes blank.

"Are you people out of your minds?" the alpha male says. "This isn't what we talked about. This isn't what you said you were going to do. What about the story we agreed on?"

"There's tons of story in there," Anita says. "Don't you think?"

"What happened to all the shots of the president at his desk?"

This often happens at these screenings—the first problem is that their boss isn't in it enough. "They were dull," I say, sniffing for emphasis. You have to be looking for it, but even with the air-conditioner on and the windows closed, the slightest trace of skunk is still discernible. "What did you want, the same boring video everybody else is making?"

"But he's not in it at all!" the woman client says. "He happens to be the founder of this company."

"When I was working in the bush," the Doctor says, "I often observed the wisest rulers not taking part in certain rituals. They enjoyed the spectacle of the ceremonial tribe."

"Other reactions?" Dwight says.

The beta male pipes up. "I thought it had some great energy," he says. "It made the company seem like fun."

The alpha male shoots him an unmistakable look of shut-your-face. "The product isn't even mentioned once!" he exclaims. "This was supposed to be about the bugs. You were supposed to talk about how this new version of the product eliminates all those bugs."

"People don't want to hear about bugs," Dwight says.

"That's right," I put in. "Haven't they heard enough?"

The alpha male gets out of his chair. "We tell you what we want and we leave you alone, and you get freaky on

IN THE COUNTRY

The lamplight, whirring
with mosquitoes, streams
out the screen door,
across the lawn,
and enters the forest.
Mist is rising from the ferns.
All the windows are open
and the wind is blowing
through the house,
over the meadow,
and rippling the surface
of the lake.
When your voice breaks
the stillness,
my pulse jumps—
as if I'm leaning
over the roof
of a tall building,
the full moon blazing
in my eyes.
One stormy night in Rome
I sat up for hours
with a girl I met
on the Paris express.
She, too, spoke with
that shivering cadence
in the blue darkness—
about her family in Spain,
her father the blind poet
and his whitewashed
house on a cliff
overlooking the sea.
In the morning
I opened my eyes
and she was crouched
at the foot of the bed
reciting his poems
from memory.
Years later, I heard
her father had been imprisoned
and her husband and son
had died of cholera;
committed to a sanitarium,
her hands and feet swollen
and her hair
falling out in sheaves—
dry as wheat—
she crept up to the roof
one night during a blizzard,
waited for the bells
to ring Vespers,
and jumped.

You've brought all this
back to me.
The thunder and lightning,
and the cats crying
like frightened angels
on the Via Cavour
while rain drilled the rooftops.
I tell myself it happened
a long time ago
and that here (miles
from the nearest road)
nothing can touch us,
even as moonlight crosses
the lake and the meadow
and enters the bedroom
window, enfolding you
like a sheet
and carrying you away.

—NICHOLAS CHRISTOPHER

• •

us. I'm giving you a week to fix this tape."

"Fixing this tape is beside the point," I say.

"Oh, really," he says.

"Anybody can puff a product," Dwight says. "We're vision people. We work with the big themes."

"Fine," the alpha male says. "You have a week to find one."

He snaps his briefcase shut and stomps off to the stairs with his colleagues in line behind him. Only the friendly beta male turns to wave goodbye. We peek down to the street through the venetian blinds and watch them drive away.

The Doctor puts his arm around Anita's shoulders. "Rough cuts are always, you know, rough," he says.

"Rough?" Anita says. "I think we just entered lawsuit territory."

"The other guy liked it," I say, but Anita just shakes her head. I've never seen her so discouraged.

"Is anybody hungry?" Dwight inquires.

"I could eat a little something," the Doctor says.

Chinese food always cheers Anita up. "Kung-pao chicken?" I say to her. "Scallops in spicy garlic sauce? Szechuan shrimp?"

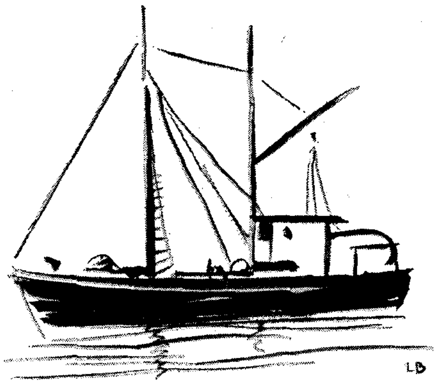
"I don't want *anything*," she says.

"All the more Hunan octopus for me," Dwight says, leading us down the stairs.

It proves to be a pretty summer evening, with the heat letting up and blue sky and puffs of cloud above the mostly brown two- and three-family houses that line our street. I tap Dwight's shoulder. "Can we talk about something? Tenant to landlord?"

"Uh-oh," he says, following me down the drive.

I take him around back where we keep the garbage barrels. They're on their sides, lids off, bags ripped open. Trash is strewn across the ground like the past rushing before our eyes—every piece of junk mail we've received this week mingled with the remains of all the food we've eaten. And hovering above the devastation is the abiding aura of skunk.



"I bought these really good garbage cans," Dwight says.

"I think the raccoons help them take off the lids," I say. "They have thumbs or something."

"I just want to point out that if we start killing them we're going up against the whole ecosystem. There must be thousands on the waiting list for the next available house."

"I don't want to kill them," I say.

"Good," Dwight says, heading back up the drive. "Let's clean it up later." And then, gazing out over the rooftops, he says, "Why do they have to mess with our minds?"

"The skunks?"

"No, these people," he sighs, flapping his hand at the sky.

IT'S still Happy Hour when we arrive at the Chinese place our videotaped programmers voted the best. A lovely young woman brings our drinks. Perhaps on account of her loveliness we order too much food, and only items printed in red.

"To Anita, our brilliant producer!" I say, raising my glass.

"To Anita!" Dwight and the Doctor chime in.

Anita drinks up and gives us a smile.

You've got to give a little, take a little, and let your poor heart break a little.

Aristotle Instructs Young Alexander in Philosophy

• •

She's coming out of it. "I wish Rebecca could have made it to dinner," she says to the table at large. And then, to me, she adds, "Rebecca loves hot food."

"Anita, I'm just wondering," I say. "Is there any reason to think that Rebecca might have made it to dinner? Tonight, I mean?"

"Oh, well, she was supposed to stop by this afternoon, that's all. But with Rebecca you never know."

"He knows that," Dwight says.

"I've told her all about you," Anita says.

"Just nod your head," Dwight says.

"Rebecca's very nice," the Doctor says. "Who have you got lined up for me?"

"I thought you were promised to a chieftain's daughter," Anita says.

"I am. But you can have many wives in that culture."

The food arrives and we lay into it, chopsticks and beer bottles flashing in the air. Our eyes water and our noses liquefy, and we never let our glasses get empty.

"I'm a simple person," the Doctor says once we've begun to slow down. He always says that when he's about to take charge. "I was in the bank the other day, and they couldn't tell me how much money I had. You know why?"

"Let me guess," Dwight says. "We're getting too dependent on technology."

"Cars are O.K.," the Doctor says. "I like my toaster oven. But there's something creepy about computer stuff. I can't relate to it."

"Well, it's totally non-human," I say.

"Don't say that," Anita says. "We can't say non-human."

"But isn't it true?" I say. "If you think about it, the blind faith is almost unbelievable. People trust their whole lives—*their money*—to these incomprehensible creations beyond their control. When have human beings ever trusted anything like that?"

Dwight rises from his chair with a peculiar smile, squinting as though dazzled by brilliant lights. "I just had an idea," he says. "I have to go call somebody."

The fortune cookies come while he's on the phone. Anita and the Doctor receive identical predictions: great success awaits them around the corner. Dwight returns to find that he will meet an influential stranger. " 'Your friends are your greatest wealth,' " I read aloud from my own slip of paper, and we drain our glasses in a toast to that. Then I put the fortune in my wallet for safekeeping. It actually says "You Will Have a Long and Happy File."

OUTSIDE, a thin orange line remains in the sky to the west. In the Bonneville, the stick-on digital dashboard clock says 2:17 without specifying morning or afternoon. It's wrong either way; we're driving home in a twilight the pearl gray of Dwight's new socks.

"Can I fix this tape in one week?" Anita asks.

"I was thinking you could, and then you said that," the Doctor says, sitting next to me in the back.

Dwight is taking a strange way home. In a neighborhood unknown to me he parks in front of a broken-down triple-decker. "I have to borrow a piece of equipment," he says, running into the house, and then he emerges with a big cardboard box, which he stows in the trunk. When we pull into our drive, he says, "I'd like to have a little partners' meeting upstairs right now. Walter, while we're doing that would you mind cleaning up the garbage out back?"

"Sure, Dwight," I say. "You guys have a meeting, I clean up the trash."

He gives me his famous smile and pinches my cheek. "You're playing a very important role," he says.

In the back yard I make sure I'm working alone—skunks have no fear and maybe no brains, and if you're not careful you can saunter right onto their heads—and then I scrape up the garbage with a shovel and broom. The little enforcers have been systematic, no coffee filter left unturned. I'm hosing down the blacktop and rinsing off my hands when the Doctor appears, humping two big cases of lighting gear down the driveway.

"Guess what?" he says, heading into the back yard. "We're having a little shoot."

"Now?" I say.

"Exciting, isn't it?" Anita says brightly, coming after him with her computer screen in her hands. Dwight brings up the rear with a folding table and the big orange extension cord. He sets those things down and crooks a finger to beckon me back up the driveway.

"Now, Dwight? We're having a shoot now?"

"Inspiration doesn't punch a clock, Walter. You know that. Plus, this idea has to be shot at night. It won't have the same spooky look in the daytime."

"Oh. Am I working on the script out here?"

"No, you're not." He opens the trunk of his car, takes out the big box, and walks to the house. "Let's go to your place," he says on the porch. I open the door and follow him down the hall to my room. He drops the box on my bed. "How do you feel, Walter?" he asks.

"I feel great," I say.

"Good. Close your eyes," he says. "It's a surprise."

I close my eyes. Dwight holds something fuzzy up under my chin. I open my eyes again. A great expanse of black fur spreads from my neck to the floor. I peek into the opened cardboard box. It contains the head of a gorilla.

"What's this for, Dwight? Who's gonna wear this?"

He looks at me the way you look at a child, then he lays the furry body in my arms and rests the head on top. "Congratulations, Walter. You'll be directed by the lovely Anita."

I've had bad parts before, but always within my own species. I don't even know how you do this. "Do I keep my shoes on?" I ask.

"You don't keep anything on," Dwight says. "This is an action role in a heavy outfit. You'll be too hot if you're dressed in there. Plus, you'll feel more feral without your pants." He holds up an outstretched hand. "You're on in five," he says, and waves goodbye.

I get out of my clothes and into the suit. Powerful polyester fumes envelop me; I smell like new wall-to-wall carpet. I stand before the full-length closet mirror. Sticking out of the enormous black body, my little human face looks pathetic, so I put on the head, and when I consult the mirror again a change takes place in the chemistry of my brain. I bound out of the bedroom, huge shoulders squeezing through the doorway. The kitchen is flooded with white light, the window as bright as a television screen. My friends are in the back yard, arranging Anita's computer on the table at the edge of the lawn. I pad out to the enclosed back porch and watch them for a minute from there. Then I leap down into the lights and roar.

"Walter!" Anita cries. "I can't believe it! I can't believe how incredible you look! It is you, isn't it, Walter? *Walter?*"

I swipe at the air and run across the grass. The Doctor hoists the camera to his shoulder. "Kalimba, lord of the jungle!" he proclaims. "No creature dare trifle with mighty Kalimba!"

They have a small color monitor propped on the equipment cases so Anita can watch the framing of the shots. I lumber over there to see myself in it. I scratch my ribs and beat my chest. "*Hey,*" I say. "*I do look pretty scary, don't I?*" But inside the big, hollow head my voice is muffled and indistinct.

"Ruh, ruh, ruh," Dwight says, imitating the way I sound.

I hear an unfamiliar voice and I spin around. A strange woman is standing in the shadows beside me. I jump back in surprise, lose my footing in the cumbersome suit, and fall down on the ground. Anita rushes over to help me up. "Kalimba," she says, managing to stop laughing for a moment, "this is Rebecca. Rebecca, Kalimba. Kalimba's the guy I've been telling you about," she says, and then she cracks up again.

Rebecca is wearing black jeans and a light-blue silky top, and smiling very weakly. I put out my paw to shake her hand. She steps away and waves instead, and puts her hands behind her back.

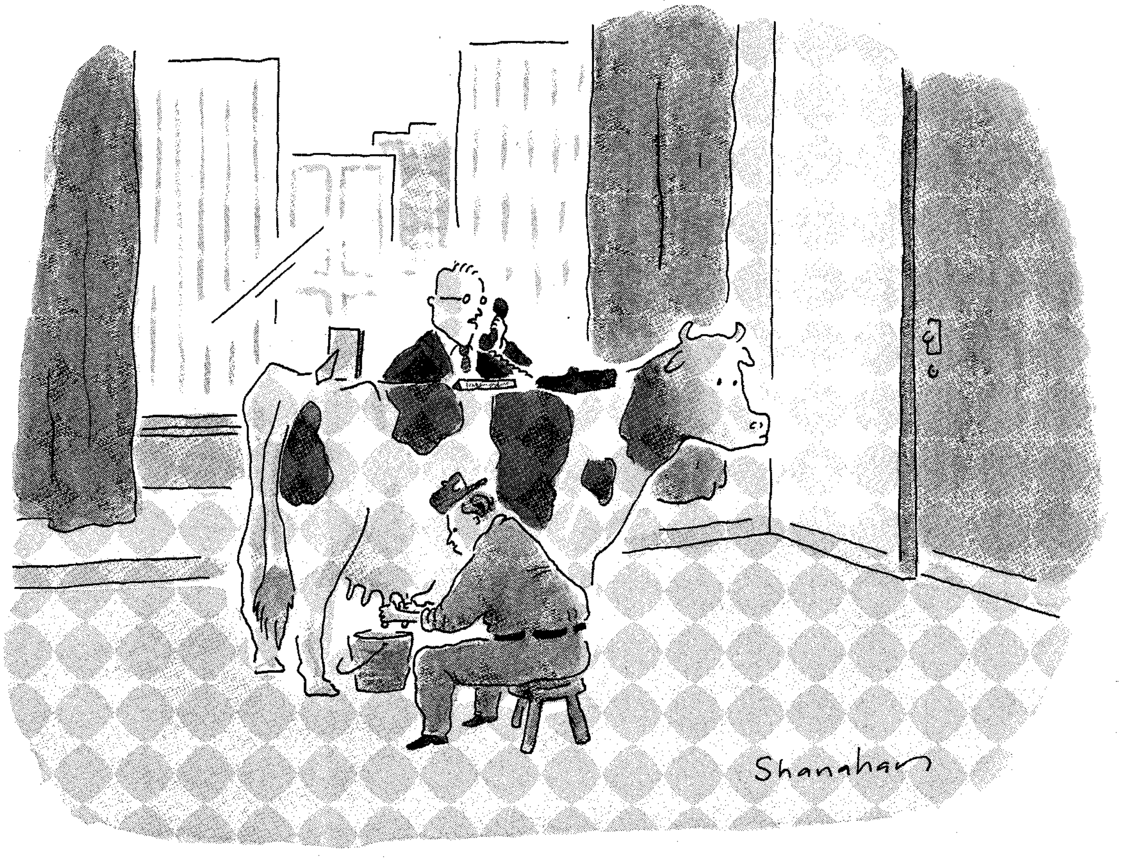
"*My name is actually Walter,*" I say, waving in return. "*Can you hang around for a while? Until we finish this shoot? Maybe we could have a drink or something.*"

"What's he saying?" Rebecca asks Anita.

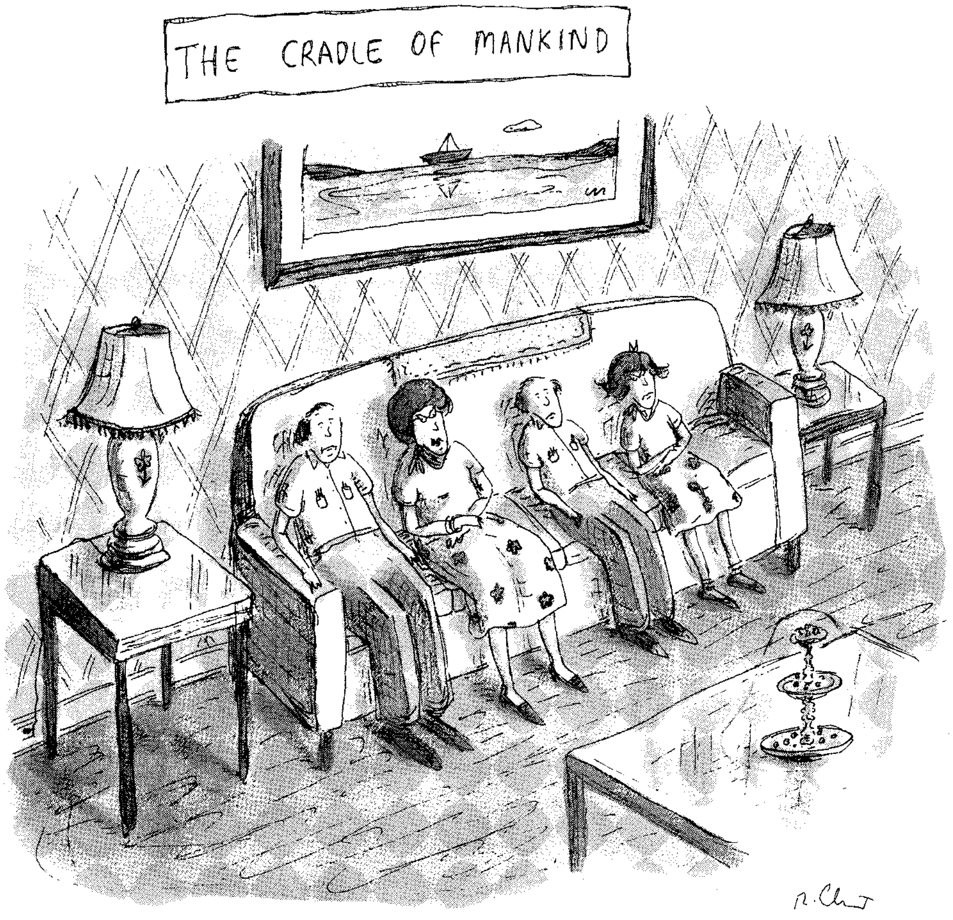
"Beats me," Anita says. "We can't understand you, ape boy."

"Maybe if you took off your head," Rebecca suggests.

"Time to get to work,



"*Can I call you back, R.B.? I've got a situation here.*"



Kalimba,” Dwight calls out. “No socializing with the females.”

“Hide behind those bushes,” Anita says. “I’ll give you a cue.”

A wall of scrappy hedges lines the property’s rear edge, long stalks of jungly sumac trees sprouting up in the gaps. I crawl through and hide in the neighbor’s back yard. Dwight trains the lights on my hiding place. The Doctor gets into position with the camera. And then Anita calls, “Kalimba, claw your way out through the trees!”

I burst through the vegetation and do my best King Kong in the lights, flailing and howling. Then I act amazed to see Anita’s PC. I stalk it on all fours.

She improvises in a narrator’s voice. “*Do you sometimes think computers weren’t made for human beings?*” she says. “*Are you tired of searching for the right business software? Well, take a look at our products.* O.K., Kalimba, look at the computer screen. Scratch your head. *They’re certainly not primitive.* Now play with the computer. Tap on the keyboard and stuff. Great. Now jump up and down and act real happy. *But they’re so easy to use, even a monkey can do it.*”

I nod my head up and down and dance all around in apelike wonder. I point to the computer screen. I pound the ground with my feet. “*It’s not an easy life for me here, Rebecca,*” I say. “*I slave over video scripts night and day, and then as soon as I finish one they change their minds and make me do it again. If things don’t turn out right, I have to do this.*”

“Ruh, ruh, ruh, ruh,” Dwight says.

“We’re rolling, Kalimba,” Anita says. “Do more ape things.”

I play with the computer again, acting out big monkey excitement over the shapes and colors on the screen. I lope across the lawn on my knuckles. I cling to the Empire State Building and swipe at the airplanes around my head. And then, while plucking nits out of my coat, I notice two big skunks sniffing around by the garbage cans. Dwight catches me looking and he looks, too, and then he swings a movie light onto the racing-striped creatures. They sit up and blink their vacant little eyes.

“Get them!” Anita calls to the Doctor, and he moves in for the shot. “*We won’t comment on our competition,*” she narrates. “*But we’ve seen them lurking around.*”

“Hey, those are skunks!” Rebecca cries.

“Isn’t it great?” Anita says. “They live here. They’re ours.”

But Rebecca panics and tries to run away across the grass. Dwight, always the heads-up producer, spins the Doctor around by his shirt so he can shoot her doing that. And me, I don’t even need direction for this. Life is a video for me now. I step into Rebecca’s path and sweep her up in my arms.

“*Let us save you from our competitors!*” Anita shouts.

Rebecca screams and kicks and demands that I let her go. But Dwight throws a handful of popcorn at my feet, the oblivious skunks mosey right over to get it, and Rebecca yields to my furry embrace. I glance down to watch the skunks having their snack. Seeing them up close like this is doing something odd to my mind. It’s bringing back my dream—reminding me that skunks were my only companions when Jeanette turned me away from her door.

“*Rebecca, you’re doing great,*” I say. “*I think you have real star potential. Don’t tell me you’ve never acted before.*”

I look out across the yard at Anita and Dwight and the Doctor. I’ve never seen them so happy. I say to myself: Kalimba, these are the people who helped you when you were a miserable, lonely wreck. They gave you a new shot at life. They taught you their glamorous profession. These are your friends, Kalimba, your greatest wealth. And now what do they ask from you in return? Only that you stand in the bright movie lights with a woman in your arms and be everybody’s charming hero.

“*Relationships take faith and hope and coöperation,*” Anita narrates. “*We’re a big software company, but we think of ourselves as a gentle giant. You can trust us with your precious data.*”

Isn’t it true?

—RALPH LOMBREGLIA

•

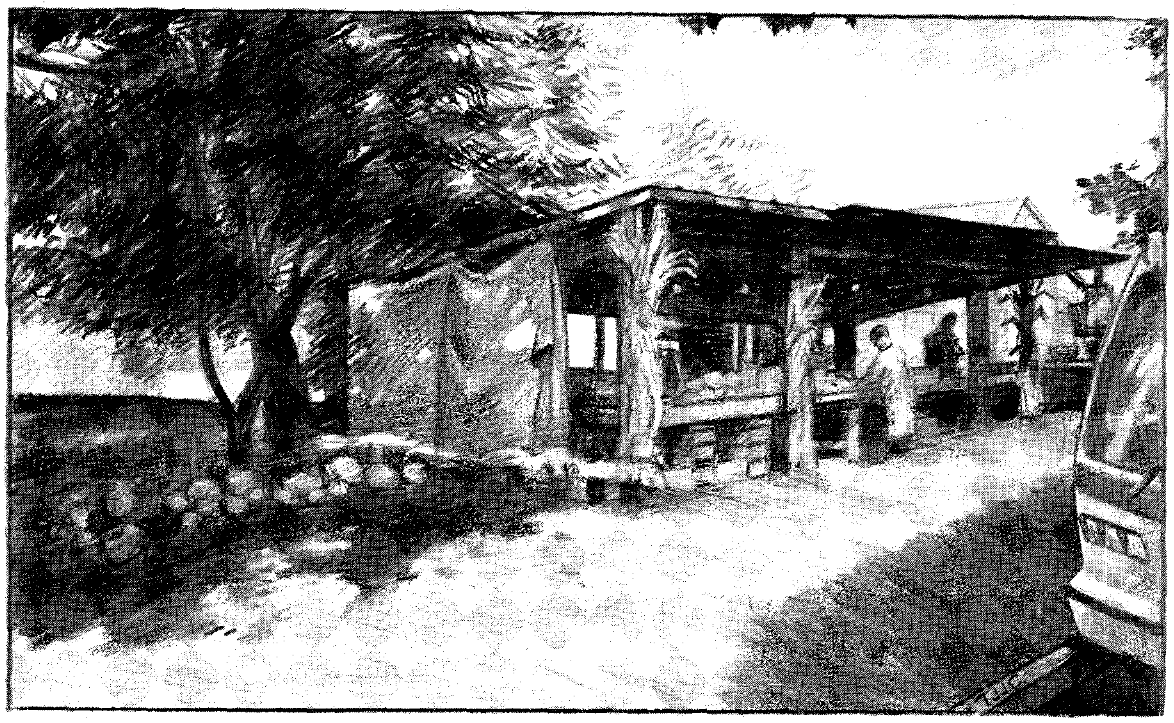
AMERICA, AMERICA

[*Headline in the Hyannis* (*Mass.*) *Cape Cod Times*]

GYPSIES FIGHT REPUTED NUDISTS OVER BABY SOLD BY EX-FIREBUG

REFLECTIONS

ENCOUNTERING THE COUNTRYSIDE—I



EVEN though I know it's there, and can see it in my mind, and can even remember the fresh smell of its damp earth, when I go visit the old Klein farm, out in a residential part of northeastern Queens—it's about eleven miles almost due east of the Empire State Building, and at the moment it's the only working family farm in New York City—the initial sight of the place always catches me by surprise. The first time I went there was by public transportation—a long ride on the F train followed by a long ride along Union Turnpike on the Q44A bus. The final leg of this route was a short hike north on 195th Street, a quiet, two-block-long, tree-lined stretch of neatly spaced, self-contained single-family houses, garages, driveways, and front lawns with crewcuts, where in the early afternoon the only moving vehicles were driving-school cars.

Then I got to the corner of Seventy-third Avenue, and there, on the other side of the street, was the Klein farm. What stopped me in my steps was that the place looked huge—an appearance that made no sense, because John Klein, the third-generation Queens farmer who runs the place, had told me on the phone that he had only two acres; his family had started selling most of their farmland, a hundred and forty acres, fifty years ago. But the place seems to be made of elbowroom, scope, leeway, and room to spare: there's a big brick house on the side of a hill, with a brick barn behind it, and even a second house—a little two-story brick house with a pitched roof—tucked neatly into one corner of the property. There are big trees near the big house, and sloping cropland behind it, pushing up row after row of vegetables, and in front there's a wide, rolling lawn that comes right down to the sidewalk.

There is also a farm stand—a large, deep, sturdy, open-sided, maple-shaded structure, overflowing in season with baskets and crates of fresh fruits and vegetables—and it has plenty of standing-around space for squeezing tomatoes or catching up on events with Barbara Klein, John Klein's wife. The placement of the Klein farm stand, it eventually occurred to me, is what gives the farm such a sense of amplitude: it's not right up front, and it isn't exactly set back; it looks as though it had just nosed up next to one of the big maple trees in the middle of the lawn and then spread out under the tree's shade.

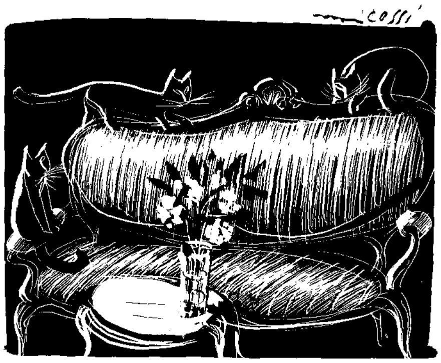
The next time I visited the Klein farm, I had a car, and came at it from the north and west, dropping off the Long Island Expressway at the Fresh Meadows exit and driving slowly south and east through the twisting narrow lanes, crescents, circles, and ovals of Fresh Meadows—a hundred-and-seventy-acre garden-apartment rental community built by the New York Life Insurance Company shortly after the Second World War. One of the Fresh Meadows crescents brought me out to Seventy-third Avenue, where I made a left, and there was the Klein farm. I realized that in terms of square footage the Klein farm is only a little bite of land that didn't get swallowed by New York Life forty years ago; there is a three-story Fresh Meadows walkup right next to the west side of the Klein place, and an almost identical Fresh Meadows building in back of the farm, on the north. As I got out of the car, I began to feel something that I had also noticed when I walked up to the farm on my first visit: a kind of welcome.

This time, John Klein, a strong, sturdy, quiet-talking man in his mid-forties, who was wearing bluejeans and a blue T-shirt, was taking a rest from weeding and harvesting and bagging groceries for farm-stand customers, and he had time to invite me up onto the back of the farm. Klein's two-hundred-year-old back field, carefully safeguarded by his family ever since they bought it from the descendants of the first farmers in the area, turned out to be a tiny, complex, satisfying, and eye-opening piece of property. Our walk took us up a cracked concrete driveway behind the farm stand, past a small old gray-and-red Ford tractor, past a holding area for handcarts and extra crates and baskets, and past the big house—a sturdy, roomy three-story red brick farmhouse John Klein's grandfather built for his family in 1930, when the Kleins were still farming a hundred and forty acres in this part of Queens. There's an enormous kitchen in the basement of this house—it doesn't see much use these days—that was built so that the Kleins could accommodate as many as fifty farmhands at mealtime during the growing season. The farmhouse, like the farm stand, is maple shaded, because Adam Klein, John Klein's grandfather, planted nine five-foot maples next to the house when he built it, to keep the place a bit cooler in the summer, and seven of them survive. The house has a small front porch with a roof and two white columns; two small white wooden benches, facing each other, flank the front door. Past the farmhouse, the driveway ends, and you have to follow a narrow dirt path that runs next to a long, ground-hugging greenhouse covered by a loose-fitting, hoop-shaped plastic roof and ends at parallel lines of beet greens and cucumber vines. When I've stood out here for a minute or two, whatever the season, I've found that after taking a stroll of no more than a few hundred yards I've reached a place that surrounds me with a strong sense of having travelled somewhere deep into the open countryside.

Part of this has to do with Public School 26. In the nineteen-fifties, the New York City Board of Education bought from the Klein family part of the land in back of the farm, to the north, and all the remaining family land on the east side of the farm, to build a new grade school for the children of Fresh Meadows. The city's engineers chopped off all the east side of the Kleins' hill to put in a large, level asphalt playground, but they apparently never figured out a use for the land they had acquired just north of the farm. As a result, this bit of land is still hilly; the school building itself is down at the bottom of the hill, to the northeast of the farm. And, because this bit of land hasn't been paved or farmed, or even played on much, during the last thirty years, it's beginning to revert to woodland: there's now a shady patch of oak trees behind a chain-link fence at the back of the farm.

Beyond still seeming like open country, John Klein's back field transmits a feeling I used to think existed only in children's books or in science fiction: my sense of community and connection is stretched and extended in several different directions at once, so that "now" seems to be a time that began many generations ago and has no foreseeable ending, while "here" becomes a place that stretches far beyond the horizon, and even "we" seems to involve both the land itself and the people living on it. I think this is because the Klein farm isn't just somewhere out in the open country; it's the surviving representative of a specific territory. And that makes it possible for you to feel in this particular place that, whatever has happened to the world in the last half century, right here you're still standing inside the boundaries of an ancient and abundantly productive region of working countryside covering thousands of acres: a landscape that set the pattern for all of this part of Queens until change overtook it and, shortly after the end of the war, obliterated it forever.

This region was rural Flushing: a wide expanse of big truck farms, with immense, rolling fields that stretched on and out in all directions—fields a lot like the vast potato and cauliflower fields that are still being farmed seventy miles east of Flushing, on the North Fork of Long Island. In its peak years—starting, say, in the second half of the nineteenth century and extending through most of the first half of this century—rural Flushing was renowned chiefly for its long growing season, made possible by the nearness of the Atlantic Ocean, which holds off the frosts that strike upstate farms not long after Labor Day and sets up an Indian summer. Often Flushing farmers were able to harvest Kieffer pears, the last fruit to ripen in the fall, as late as the week after Thanksgiving.



Up on the North Shore, along the Sound, were a few factories turning out tinware and ironware and—in the early years—goods made of whalebone and India rubber. Near the factory settlements were some small fishing and oystering and clamming villages. To the northwest of rural Flushing, along the east side of Flushing Bay, was the village of Flushing, which by the eighteen-eighties had become an affluent, city-oriented community of commuters—an hour to Manhattan on a weekday morning, either by steamboat or on one of three different railroad lines.

Early-twentieth-century rural Flushing still had a few, much cherished late-seventeenth-century apple orchards and cherry orchards, which had been set out by a group of Huguenot families who moved into the area for a few years after fleeing France, and then moved on; it also had several highly prized groves of tall specimen trees and elegant shade trees—copper beeches, elms, lindens, cedars of Lebanon—which had been planted either by a celebrated local eighteenth-century nurseryman, William Prince (George Washington visited Prince's nursery), or by an even more celebrated nineteenth-century nurseryman, Samuel B. Parsons (Parsons helped design the grounds of the Bronx Botanical Garden, and supplied both Central Park and Prospect Park with some of their original trees and shrubs). One of Parsons' trees, a sixty-foot-tall weeping beech in the village of Flushing with a great overhanging canopy, eighty-five feet across, still flourishes, and, in fact, has been showered with attention in recent decades: it sits in the middle of a small city park enclosed by a cast-iron fence, Weeping Beech Park, and in 1966 it became the first tree ever named an official living landmark by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Here and there throughout rural

Flushing—on the hilltops, or surrounding some freshwater ponds or creeks, or patches of wetlands that had never been drained—sizable silent clumps of deep oak woods and maple woods survived, sheltering deer, and even a few porcupines. Except for these woods, the land of rural Flushing was given over to open fields, acre after acre of them, planted every summer to potatoes, spinach, rhubarb, beans, lettuce, corn, parsnips, tomatoes, carrots, beets, kale, and Savoy cabbage—crops that got loaded onto wagons and hauled into big public markets in lower Manhattan or Brooklyn or to a smaller market down near the summer resorts that had sprung up in Canarsie, where one of the selling points of the new hotels was the "farm-fresh food" on their bills of fare.

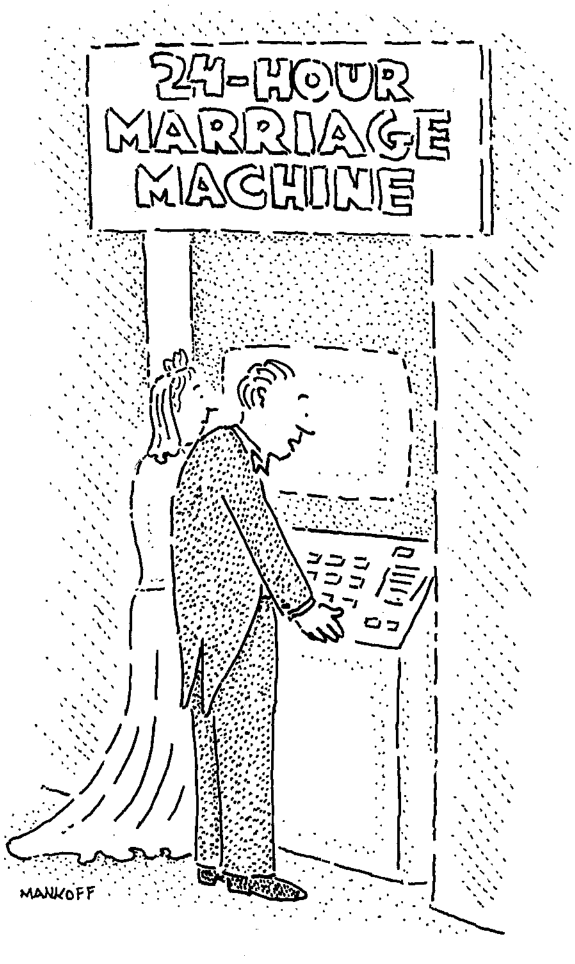
All over rural Flushing, in the years when it flourished, you would have found a sprinkling of good-sized farmhouses, some of stone and some of wood, a number of which dated back as far as the Revolution. Many of the earliest houses had been built by English farming families, and some of these had eventually been sold to Dutch farming families from down in Brooklyn; Dutch farmers tended to have big families, and often outgrew their original settlements. A final wave of Queens County farmers—German farming families, for the most part, and some Polish farming families—arrived in rural Flushing in the eighteen-seventies and eighties. After a few years as farmhands or tenants, they had often acquired enough money to buy out their employers or neighbors and move into the big old farmhouses, with their shade trees up close, and generally a small stand of fruit trees within walking distance; a cluster of stables, barns, and sheds, for the draft horses; a couple of dairy cows, for the family; some chickens, for their meat and eggs; and at least one or two guard dogs.

The majority of the rural Flushing farms dated back to the years just after the Revolution. For almost all the present postglacial age—the period that began when the last North American and European glaciers receded north, eighteen thousand years ago—what is now northern Queens had been heavily forested, and only very lightly settled. The hills of the area are the work of the glacier, which, at its greatest reach, extended from the Arctic to a point about a mile south of the Klein farm. The rich, dark soil of the area is also a legacy of the glacier: the ice scraped the topsoil off preglacial New England and carried it to northern Long Island. South of the point where the glacier stopped, the land is sandy, gravelly, and much flatter.

Between 1776 and 1783, almost all the Long Island woods disappeared. English troops occupied Long Island throughout the American Revolution, and, as soon as the English military regime took over, British authorities instituted a policy of stepped-up resource extraction. In addition to requisitioning chickens and cows from Long Island farmers, the British shipped out huge quantities of timber. Black Stump Road, as Seventy-third Avenue in Flushing was originally called, probably dates from around that time, and the name may reflect the land-use policies of the British troops. By the time the Americans got the island back, most of the postglacial hardwood forests, dominated by great chestnuts and huge oaks, had been cleared. What woods remained went through further changes: a great blight destroyed nearly all the chestnut trees on this continent around 1900, and during the First World War many of the surviving walnut trees on Long Island were felled because the wood made good gunstocks.

When farmers arrived in force to cultivate the Long Island land that had been deforested by the British, the greater part of the West End of the island, as it was then called, became fields, orchards, meadows, and pastures. (The West End—a term no longer used—took in all of Brooklyn, Queens, and what is now Nassau County, a county formed in 1898 by three old Queens County townships that refused to join the new, five-borough City of New York, because they wanted to remain permanently rural.) Although no one seemed to pay much attention to the fact, the clearing of the forests had created a continuous band of openness the length of Long Island—the first such line of open land since the island's early postglacial tundra period, eighteen thousand years ago. This line had five main links: the West End fields; the Hempstead Plains; the Oak-Brush Plains; the Pine Barrens; and the East End fields, on the North Fork and the South Fork.

The cleared fields of Flushing stood just north and west of the Hempstead Plains, which was the only naturally occurring prairie east of the Alleghenies—a tract of rolling grassland, some twenty miles long and five miles wide, that was admired by eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century visitors to Long Island. The Plains, which were originally held as a common—they were owned jointly by all the farmers who pas-



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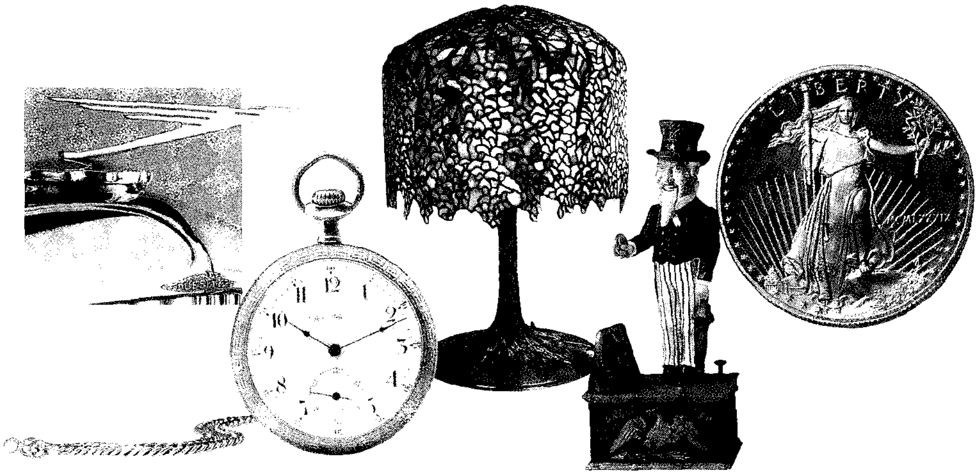

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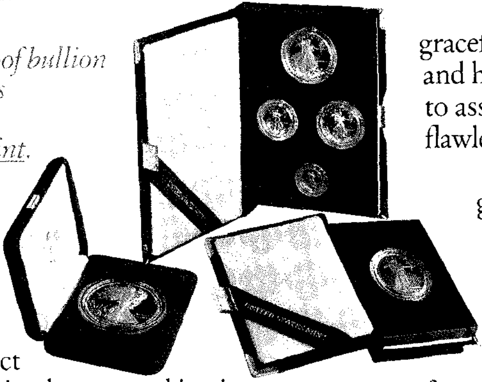

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tured livestock on them—received their greatest number of visitors during the first two weeks of May, before the grasses grew tall, at the time of the flowering of the bird's-foot violet. So many billions of these five-petalled prairie wildflowers blossomed at once that the Plains presented an unbroken vista of purple haze—a blend of deep purple, lavender, lilac, and white that one naturalist called "a celestial hue due to thousands of bouquets."

The shape of the Plains could still be seen until 1947, when William J. Levitt, a Long Island builder, began constructing Levittown on what was left of them; seventeen thousand four hundred and forty-seven houses went up over the next four years. To the east of the Plains—in the island's line of open space—came the Oak-Brush Plains, sixty thousand acres of dwarf oak trees under a few widely scattered pitch pines. Then came the Pine Barrens, covering a quarter of a million acres, forty to forty-five per cent of which remains open today, and, in its hillier regions, affords spectacular panoramic vistas. And beyond the Barrens was the East End, and you were back among farming families, many of whom by the end of the Revolution were old-time Long Islanders: several East End towns had been established by New Englanders who sailed across the Sound in the seventeenth century.

By the time the Kleins arrived in rural Flushing, about 1895, the countryside around their place had been farmland for over a century, and had been specializing in market gardening for seventy years. Adam Klein's father, a Brooklyn farmer, had decided to stake his son to a big place out in Queens. The son's neighbors were the Skillmans to the north, a couple of Polish farmers east, an Italian farmer west, and two Bohemian florists, who raised flowers on a tiny plot next to the Skillman place. To the south of the Klein farm—in an area now partly occupied by Cunningham Park, a large park that the city established in the nineteen-twenties—were wooded hills: the hills where the glacier stopped moving south. Adam Klein got married about two years after coming to Flushing, had seven children, and gradually, as the children grew up, acquired more property in the area: a farm to the west of his original holding, and even some land to the north, across Black Stump Road. The Klein farm that exists today is the last little piece of this fourth neighborhood farm bought by the family.

Rural Flushing was wonderful country in the days when the family first moved there, especially for children, according to Margaret Klein Pfaff, one of Adam Klein's daughters, who still lives on the farm, in the little house at its east end. "That was a great childhood we had," she recalls. "The air smelled fresher than nowadays, especially after a nice dew. The wind whistled good when snow was coming, and in the summertime you could see a thunderstorm coming a long ways away. At the back end of the farm were the wild-dogwood trees, pink and white—they were special every spring. It was a beautiful place, and we loved it, and our big old farmhouse, painted gray with white trim, and heated only with wood-burning stoves, was where all the children in the area loved to gather. We had so much space to race around in, so many places to play hide-and-seek in, so much company, so many things to learn about, kindling to bring in, corn to pop, cherries to jar, cookies to make—a dishpan full of chocolate-chip or raisin-filled sandwich cookies lasted two days at most."

Rural Flushing was the last section of the city's Long Island farmland to disappear, and some of the first non-farming uses to reach the area, during the nineteen-twenties, did little to change the character of the region: the city bought some of the southern woods just beyond the Klein land and created Cunningham Park; the Fresh Meadows Country Club bought up the Skillman farm and laid out an eighteen-hole golf course. The great crash of 1929 wiped out the cut-flower business, and the Kleins themselves started hauling their produce to market in a truck—after that they used horses only for plowing—but rural Flushing was still open country: a broad belt of everyday rural landscape, or working countryside, within the City of New York.

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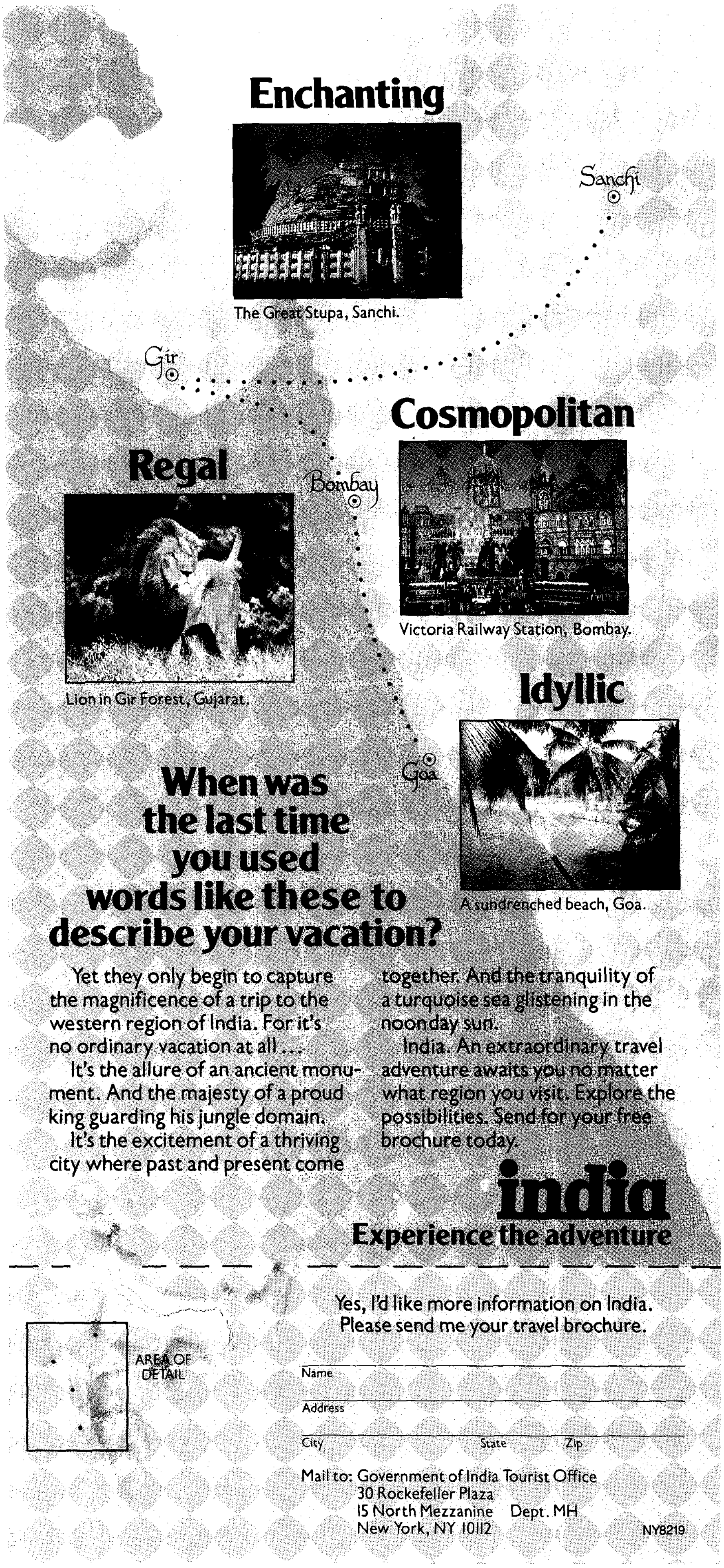
WORKING countryside; working landscape; managed landscape; humanized landscape; historic landscape; ancient landscape; cultural landscape; heritage landscape: these are all terms that have been coined over the years by botanists, landscape historians, sociologists, historical ecologists, and other specialists who have studied both the history and the future of the countryside in order to distinguish two different kinds of terrain—natural landscapes, which, in this very broad definition, are those parts of the countryside which human beings haven't altered or interfered with, and landscapes whose function and look, or character, or feel, have been shaped over time by sequential, ongoing human activities as much as by natural processes. The latter are perhaps most commonly referred to as working landscapes.

The working landscape/natural landscape distinction is admittedly a slightly tricky one. It doesn't necessarily mean just talking about open country, on the one hand, and tangled, overgrown, impenetrable country, on the other. Some landscapes that might at first glance look like natural landscapes, such as our national forests, are really either working landscapes, where all the trees are planted crops, or a blend of natural and working landscapes, and, conversely, some large areas of completely open countryside—the Hempstead Plains before Levittown, say—are naturally occurring countryside formations.

Despite this complexity, the idea of discussing countryside under two different headings has helped turn people's consideration toward some special qualities maintained by rural regions that aren't wild and aren't always spectacular, and might otherwise have seemed to be only plain, ordinary countryside. It's an idea that is still not fully formulated; a new college-level landscape-architecture textbook points out, "The profound importance of the rural and agricultural landscape has only recently received much attention." Some of the environmentalists who have started studying working-farmland landscapes take a special interest in the soil itself; they remind Americans that, for instance, only eleven per cent of the surface of the earth is rich, productive farmland, and that, as a recent Sierra Club book, "Soil and Survival," puts it, "an exceptionally large part of this eleven per cent exists here in the United States." The book quotes Hans Jenny, the dean of American soil scientists, who has discovered that on productive farmland there are more creatures living under the ground than on it and above it—"the equivalent of twelve horses per acre." Jenny concludes, "Hence, I designate soil as a living system."

Other writers have approached the subject of working landscapes more in the tradition of nature writers or landscape painters, discussing what it is that they personally feel connected to when they visit some special place in the working countryside—some "great good place," in the Jamesian phrase. In a working landscape, according to John Stilgoe, a Harvard landscape historian, "terrain and vegetation are molded, not dominated." As a consequence, he maintains, when you enter such an area you're always in the presence of a "fragile equilibrium between natural and human force." The biologist René Dubos wrote in "The Wooing of Earth" about the "charm and elegance" and "soft luminosity" of one of his favorite places in the world—the farming country of the Île-de-France, around Paris, and the landscape of his childhood—and addressed the question of how a life or a job or a vacation in the working countryside might affect someone's behavior or perceptions. When partial clearing of the wildwood changed the Île-de-France from a natural landscape into a working landscape, Dubos wrote, it gave rise to "an environmental diversity that provides nourishment for the senses and for the psyche . . . from the mosaics of cultivated fields, pastures, and woodlands, as well as from the alternation of sunlit surfaces and shaded areas." For him, the "profound origin" of that nourishment was an "increased awareness of the interdependence between human beings and their total environment."

There's a darker shading to John Stilgoe's discussion of working landscapes than you find in Dubos's writing: Stilgoe's "fragile equilibrium" between people and the environment in farming areas sounds like an achieve-



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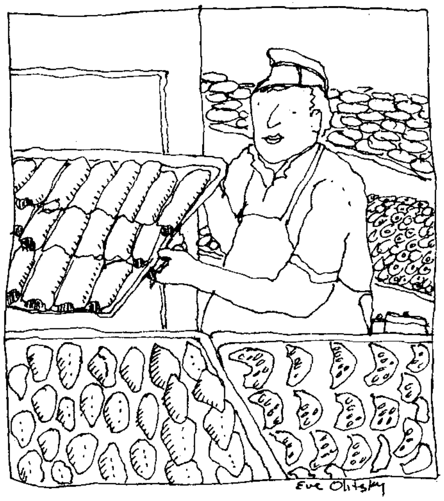
ment that might slip away from humankind as easily as a handful of liquid. Dubos, with his robust celebration of nourishment, stability, and long periods of intimate association and interactions between human beings and the environment, made working landscapes sound like a subject that humanity had long since mastered and could now count on, like the use of language. Of course, the American working landscapes have only a short, problematical history compared with their European counterparts: the most seasoned and patriarchal working landscapes in New England—Stilgoe's part of the country—are now only ten or eleven generations old, while the Île-de-France and parts of the English working countryside are more than a hundred and fifty generations old, at the very least.

And in New England, from long before the Second World War until very recent years, just as many old working landscapes vanished through reversion to old uses as through conversion to new ones. During this period, a great number of New England farmers going through hard times sold out to anyone who would buy, and drifted westward to states where there weren't as many boulders in the fields. Although some of the land they left was put to new urban or suburban uses—covered with highways or tract-home subdivisions or long commercial strips—a lot of the New England landscape was merely left alone after seven or eight generations of being farmed, and, the partnership dissolved, it went back to being woodland, though these newer, second-growth woods are still dotted with old cellar holes and crossed at regular intervals by tumbledown stone walls.

To many present-day European minds, a partnership landscape like that of the Île-de-France is as clearly a part of the continent's patrimony as a major cathedral or château, or the Alps. One result of this way of thinking is that even the largest contemporary European cities have deliberately retained some age-old links to the nearby countryside. Compliment the Parisians, for instance, on the clarity of the famous golden, glowing light that suffuses their city, and they are quite likely to tell you that it wouldn't exist without the two woods just west and just east of the center city—the Bois de Boulogne and the Bois de Vincennes—because the trees in these two forests block out clouds of dust that might otherwise veil and choke the city.

For almost the last two centuries, the Europeans have been developing another idea about partnership landscapes—that the sense of partnership created in such areas is a public value, even if it may have been developed by the actions of innumerable private individuals. More than fifty years before Thoreau proclaimed that natural landscapes have an innate public value ("In wildness is the preservation of the world"), William Wordsworth's 1810 travel book, "Select Views in Cumberland, Westmoreland, and Lancashire," put forward a similar thought about working landscapes. Walking through the great open moors and fells of his beloved Lake District, with its valley bottoms occupied by small green fields and old stone farmhouses, Wordsworth reflected one day that the area, which had by then inspired a whole generation of poets and painters, was so precious for developing an understanding of life that in some way it constituted "a sort of national property, in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy."

The subsequent working out of this thought has led to several further ideas, and also, in England and Wales, to a national system of protected working landscapes, created "for the nation's benefit" after the Second World War. One of these ideas has to do with "the right to roam," as it is sometimes called—something of a modern form of the pre-medieval idea of the common: a jointly owned, intricately used landscape. The old idea was that the ownership of property was never all of a piece but had to do with distributing a bundle of land-use rights—the right to farm, for instance, and the right to graze animals, and the right to gather firewood, and a right of way—among the various members of a local community. And any one use had to respect the other commonly established uses, and not diminish or trespass on any of them. In modern "common" thinking, the right to roam—a right of access to the country's landscapes—is distributed among the citizens of a whole country, and remains theirs even when different pieces of property change hands, but must itself be carefully exercised under some kind of partnership agreement, so that it doesn't interrupt or threaten a landowner's guaranteed right to privacy.



A second new idea also has to do with public value; simply put, it warns that the sense of partnership available in a landscape can be undermined, or cropped, by changes that come to an area. "Cropping public value" might mean, for instance, building in a countryside region a house that gives its new owners a spectacular view but destroys the views previously enjoyed by the other houses in the area. In this case, part of a public value would have been stripped from a landscape and converted into cash value for private gain.

RURAL Flushing's sense of partnership began to ebb in the nineteen-thirties. In 1930, Robert Moses proposed a parkway program for the New York metropolitan region, including a Brooklyn-Queens Belt Parkway, a system of interlinked highways around the perimeter of both boroughs which would connect on one end to an existing bridge to Manhattan, the Brooklyn Bridge, and on the other end to the Whitestone Bridge, a new bridge from northern Flushing over to the Bronx. The Belt Parkway, which was largely completed over the next decade, encircled rural Flushing, previously a remote area well beyond the reach of the city's mass-transportation system. And since many of the subway lines planned for in a post-First World War building program never materialized, because money for subways, if not for highways, ran out during the Depression, the Klein farm is still a long subway ride, a long bus ride, and a hike away from Manhattan. In fact, the farm is in some ways less accessible by public transportation than it used to be, because fifty years ago there was a countryside trolley-car line about a mile away that extended from the town center of Flushing to the town center of Jamaica.

In 1930, Henry Keil founded Keil Brothers, a major garden center and plant nursery, and because he set up shop in Bayside, on the eastern border of Flushing, he was in a position to watch the unravelling of rural Flushing during the Moses years. His business is still in the same spot, although the street outside has been enlarged and renamed the Long Island Expressway. The first changes, as he remembers them, were invisible, or nearly so. Speculators bought up farm properties near the land where the new highways would run. This was an invisible change, because in many cases the new owners didn't build on the land for years. Instead, they installed tenant farmers on a temporary basis, and here changes began to show, if you looked carefully, because the short-term tenant farmers took less care of the fields they worked, and, as weeds sprouted and were not cut down, the open areas began to take on a raggedy, uncared-for appearance. These final farmers of rural Flushing also neglected the old farmhouses they occupied, instead of repainting and repairing them, and so shutters sagged and porches drooped.

Twenty years ago, in a book called "The Last Landscape," the urban sociologist William H. Whyte conducted the first precise survey of this phenomenon—"an inexorable sequence of events," he called it, which brought about "the defilement" of a beautiful partnership landscape. In the nineteen-fifties, Whyte had seen the same processes consume his own favorite landscape in his home county: Chester County, Pennsylvania, twenty miles west of Philadelphia—"an unusually beautiful expanse of rolling countryside" that was, he wrote, "to some eyes, and not just my own, the most beautiful in all the country." Speculators, Whyte discovered, were always part of the chain of events: "Much of the open space that remained . . . was being stockpiled by speculators for resale at a later date. They may have leased it in the interim to a farmer, but often they simply left the land idle. Soon it would revert to a dense growth of saplings and weeds and poison ivy. Some inhabitants would be reassured

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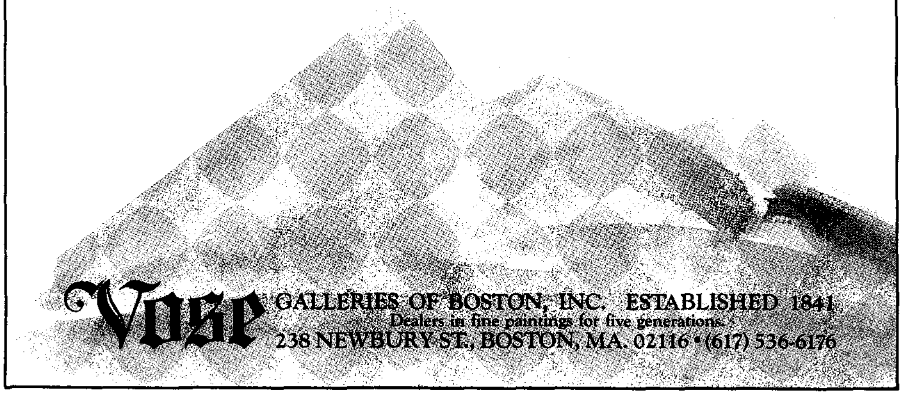

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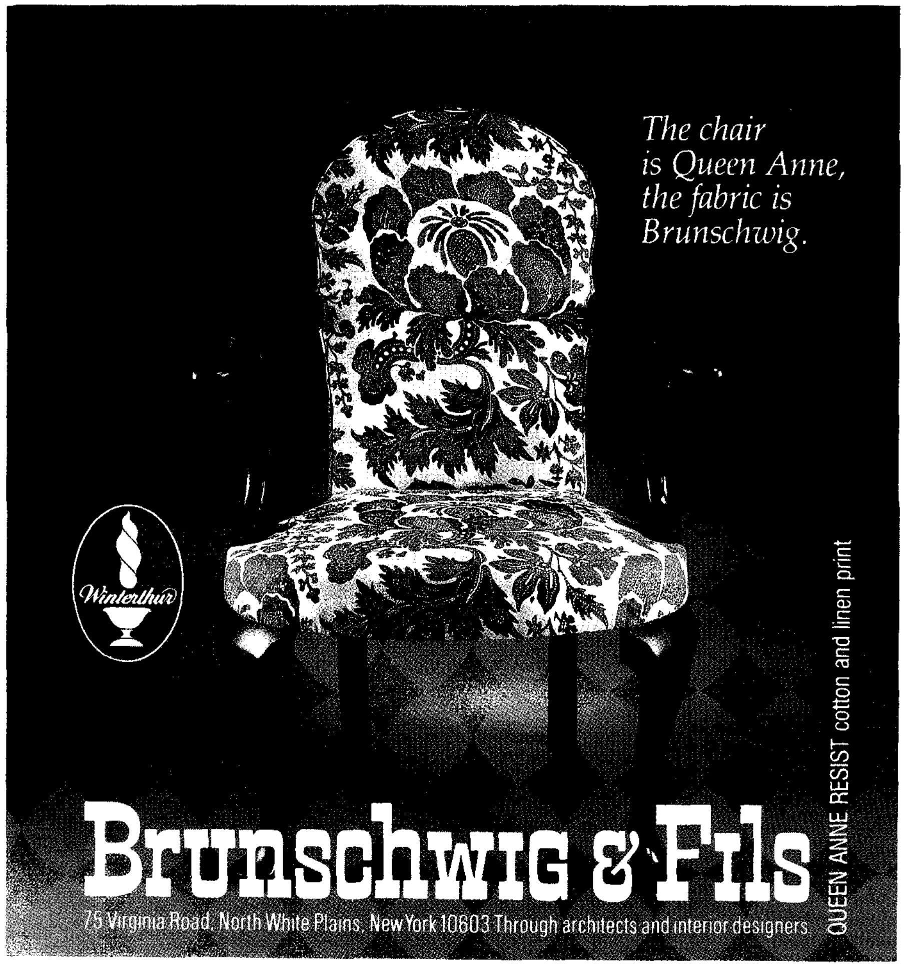

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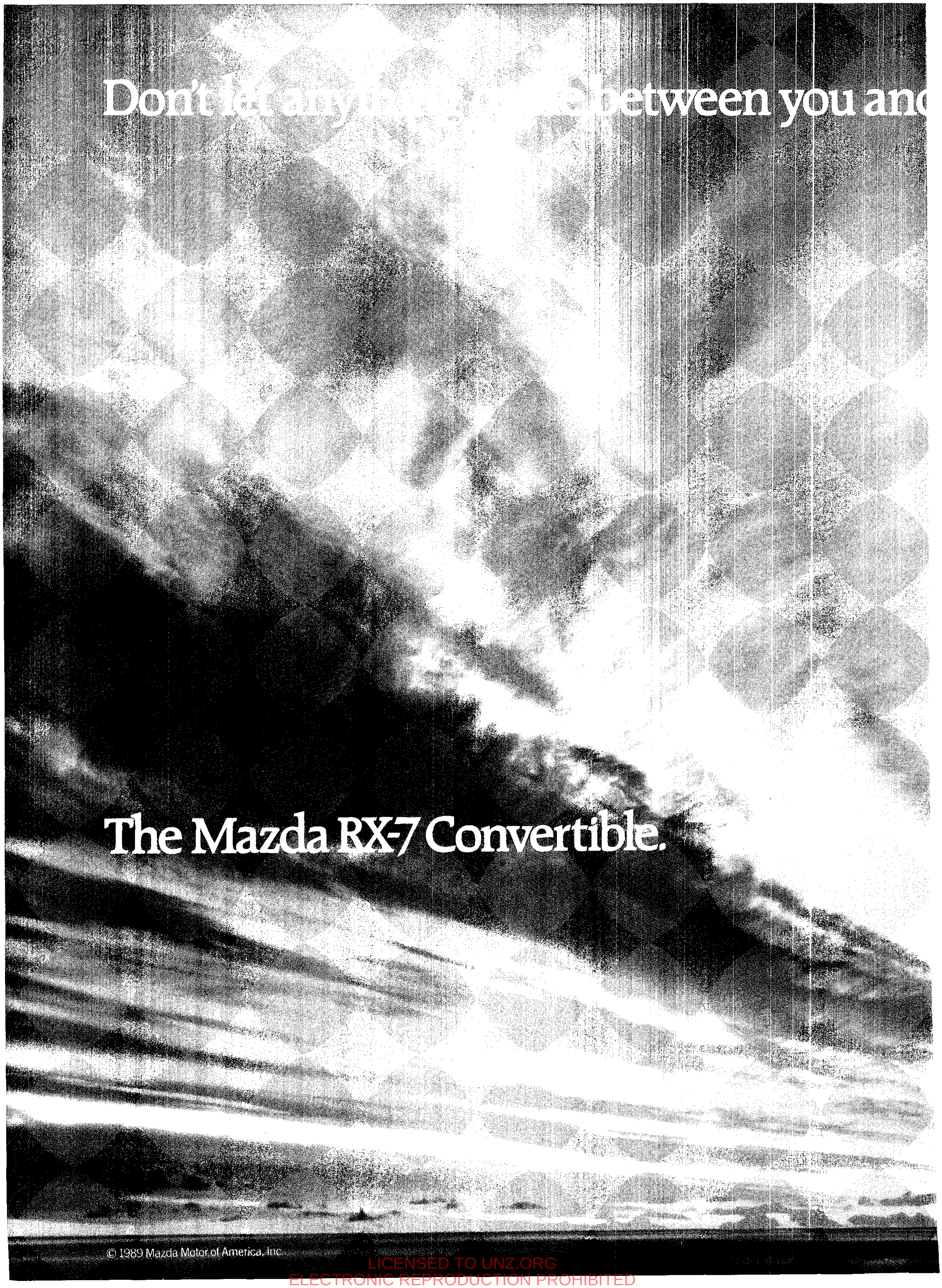
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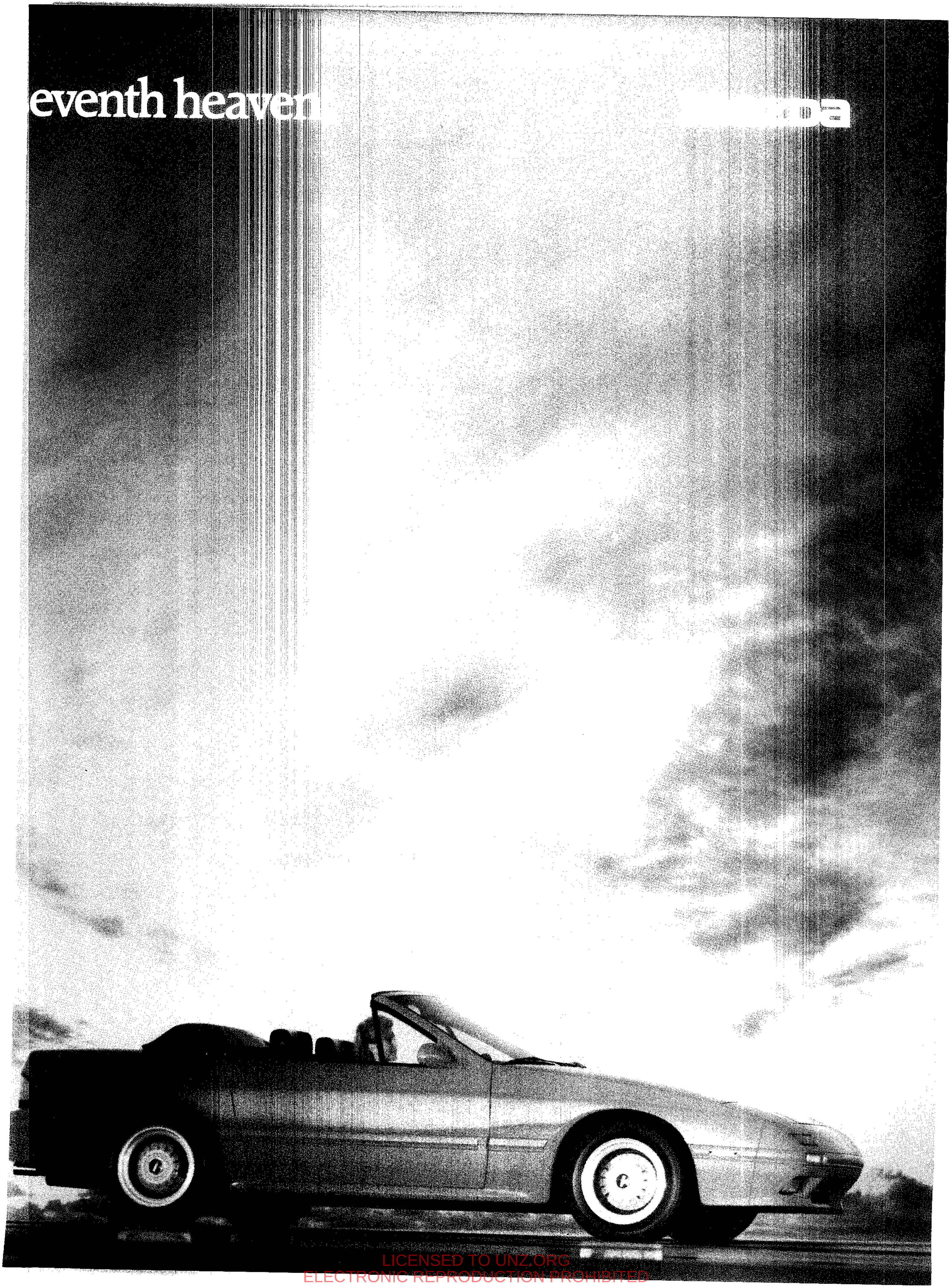
eventh heaven

"What a difference between Picasso's view of sex and the derisive, guilt-ridden American pornography."
"Picasso's tragedy was that he constantly ran out of subjects to paint!"
Lou Myers

• •

by this resurgence of nature but to the practiced eye it would be a sure tip-off the area was doomed. Thus does the speculator leave his tracks."

The Kleins fought a rearguard action against speculators and developers and highway planners for years. John Klein remembers his father telling him about actual pitched battles—"but only fisticuffs," he says—between his grandfather's farm workers and gangs of laborers who had been hired by the New Deal's Works Progress Administration in the late thirties to widen Union Turnpike, at the south end of the old farm. The road gang would steal vegetables from the fields when they thought no one was looking, but John's father would send one of his men up to the attic of the farmhouse to see what they were up to, and then would organize a countercharge. By the late thirties, Adam Klein thought that he could see the end coming: his taxes were rising, he told an interviewer in 1937, and Union Turnpike had become a stream of automobiles as soon as the W.P.A. road crews finished their job and moved on. And around that time Robert Moses sent out another W.P.A. group, with steam shovels, to start laying out baseball diamonds and tennis courts in Cunningham Park. In the woods, where dogwoods and wild-cherry trees had been, you now found abandoned cars and tree stumps chucked aside by the Moses men.

It was only a couple of years later that Adam Klein gave up the fight for the old farm. Henry Keil remembers going out to the Kleins' big barn with a lot of other people on the day they auctioned off the farm equipment. Adam Klein and his family were now living in the new red brick farmhouse he had built in 1930, on the smaller farm he now owned, over on the north side of Black Stump Road, and he began selling off chunks of his property in Flushing to real-estate agents, starting with the old fields south of Black Stump Road. As the farms of rural Flushing disappeared, it looked at first as if at least some of the expansive, wide-open-spaces feeling of the area would survive, because so much land had been converted into golf courses, like the Fresh Meadows Country Club, next to the Kleins'. But after the war almost all the golf courses—including, of course, Fresh Meadows—were themselves developed, and when the Long Island Expressway was pushed through Flushing, in the mid-nineteen-fifties, most of the still surviving century-old specimen trees that Samuel Parsons had planted throughout the region were cut down.

There is now one old farmland tree still standing in Flushing—a knobby, ungainly, and, it appears, naturally seeded two-hundred-year-old black-cherry tree a couple of miles from the Klein place. This tree grows near one edge of a small, overgrown sort of triangular lot that so far has proved to have too awkward a shape to build on. As improbable as the survival of the gawky old Flushing black cherry may be, I find the continuing existence of the two-acre Klein farm itself—and, through its existence, the continuing presence of old rural Flushing—an even more unlikely kind of event. Both the little farm and the large surrounding region could never have just happened to endure; they have had to be kept alive deliberately by four generations of Kleins (one of John Klein's sons, John, has recently decided to enter the family profession), a farming family whose loyalty to their land would not let them dissolve their partnership with their surroundings. Not that the Kleins find themselves remarkable. When I asked Mrs. Pfaff why her father had never sold out completely, she paused for a moment, and then said, "Well, it still feels like country, and he didn't want to part with it."

Unlike the ancient black cherry, which lived on unnoticed by many Flushing residents, the Klein farm has long had a number of favorable reputations among its neighbors, most of whom know the place only from beyond its perimeter—from walking past the farm stand or peering through the chain-link fences around the sides and the back of the place. Local newspapers write stories about the Klein farm every few years, even though it is now so small, because it fits into three "last" and "only" categories: it is the only land in New York City still zoned for agricultural use; it has been used only for farming ever since the oak and chestnut woods on the land were chopped down more than two hundred years ago; and it is the last working family farm inside the city limits. (Twenty-seven per cent of the city's land is covered by streets, and almost seventeen per cent is parks. Almost forty-nine per cent of the land has been zoned for three principal purposes: it is divided into industrial districts, commercial districts, and residential districts. Four per cent of the city land is zoned for schools, hospitals, and other institutions, three per cent is zoned for airports, and a little less than one thousandth of one per cent of the land in the city has been set aside for working farms.) The farm grows mainly carrots, beets, turnips, cucumbers, scallions, dill, basil, and parsley, and everything that is grown on the property is sold fresh-picked in the farm stand on Seventy-third Avenue.

Still, most of the items sold at the stand are grown on Klein farmland farther east on Long Island and trucked in fresh early each morning by John Klein, who now has to commute to his Queens farmland. At this point, the Kleins have made about as many eastward moves as is possible on Long Island. First, in the forties, they bought land in Westbury and Hicksville, in Nassau County, about eleven miles east of the Queens farm. In the fifties, when those towns started to get built up as suburbs, they relocated seven miles or so to the east, in Melville, in western Suffolk County. But Melville has changed even more dramatically than Westbury and Hicksville—Route 110, which runs past their old Melville land, turned first into a manufacturing strip and then, in this decade, into a booming office center and research-and-development corridor, with several million square feet of office space occupied by major companies like Chemical Bank, National Westminster Bank, and Estée Lauder. Land along Route 110 now goes for a million dollars an acre. So in 1972 the Kleins moved forty miles farther east, and bought a farm in Riverhead, at the west end of the North Fork.

The Kleins' Flushing neighbors have always recognized the value of having a farm stand within easy reach. And it is possible that even though most of them have never walked through the farm, they may also be responding to something present in the air: according, at least, to a new health discipline called aroma therapy, the scent of basil has a relaxing impact that releases tensions. And it looks as though something else could be at work in the area around the farm. Almost all the children attending P.S. 26 have written essays in language-arts, social-studies, or science class about how much they admire the farm, and this admiration, you find when you talk to them, reaches back behind the farm stand. Certain aspects of the farm's partnership sense catch their attention, if not that of their par-

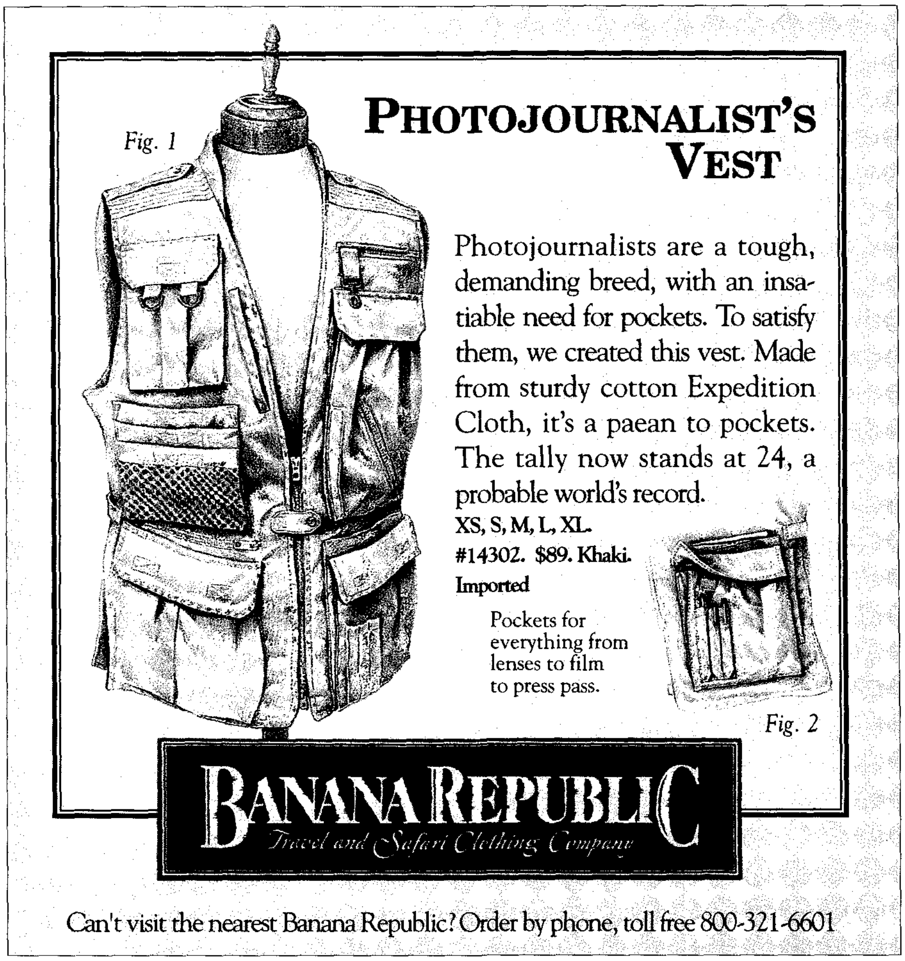

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Fig. 1

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Fig. 2

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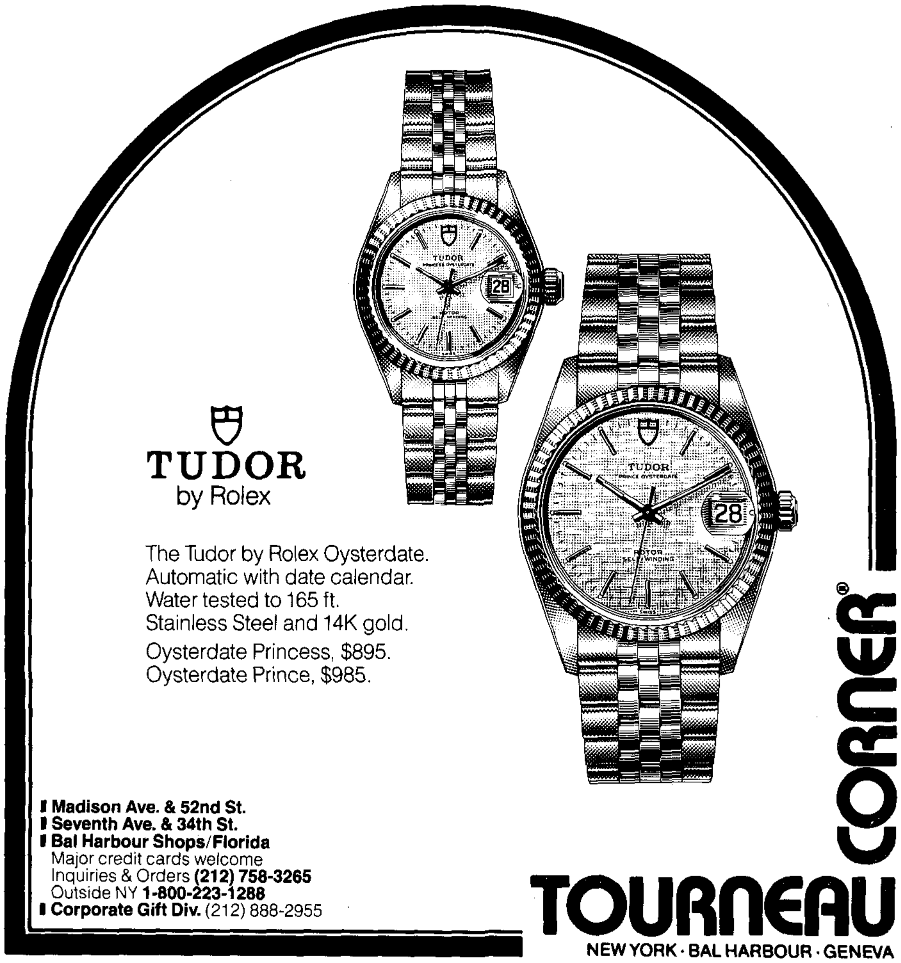

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ents. "We thought it was a mansion on a hill, set on a gorgeous carpet of lawn, with a magical greenhouse behind it—magical because none of us had ever been inside," a P.S. 26 graduate told me recently. "There seemed to be an unwritten understanding among all the kids in the neighborhood—hands off the farm. Even the toughest kids would never think of defacing anything either on the farm or at one other place—a little old overgrown Dutch cemetery, farther down Seventy-third Avenue, that to us was 'the Indian cemetery.' For me, the farm and the old oak grove within Fresh Meadows were the two refuges I had in my thoughts—the two places nearby that I could summon up inside whenever life got too complicated."

ACCORDING to some land-use experts I've been talking to recently in this country and in France, Germany, and England—people who are working out the details of what is sometimes called the landscape approach or the regional approach to metropolitan development—all the produce on display at the Klein farm, the partnership sense, and even the back-field evocation of a vast rural region, may over the next few decades become thoroughly commonplace parts of urban and suburban areas big enough to cover parts of four or more states. The regional approach is being created by an informal and loosely knit new public-private partnership of local government agencies, college research programs, nonprofit environmental groups, and private individuals with time to spare who have discovered a common interest in tackling an area's economic, environmental, and social problems simultaneously. One of the basic working assumptions emerging from the new partnership, which is widely scattered and is still small in total numbers, is that the city-and-working-country reality that in New York has been kept alive only on the two acres of the Klein farm can be successfully extended to landscape regions far larger than rural Flushing ever was. Extended, and also compounded: the land-use experts are convinced that three different forms of connectedness—the sense of kinship with all life; the sense of partnership with working landscapes; and the sense of community and companionability which is traditionally fostered by villages and urban neighborhoods—can be maintained in or, if necessary, brought back to even the most densely settled districts, old and new.

The regionalists say that much of their inspiration comes from the attention now being focussed on both working landscapes and natural landscapes. In a quiet way, they are predicting that if some of the relatively small-scale landscape projects they're currently engaged in—such as a state landscape inventory; a series of town- and regional-character plans; a design manual for a forty-three-mile-long river corridor; and plans for both narrow, largely publicly owned linear greenway parks and broader, largely privately owned working-landscape parks—begin to multiply during the nineteen-nineties it could mean that places like the Klein farm may have survived long enough to be recognized as the harbingers of a new form of human settlement.

According to the Green Cure Trust, a British group that has worked with city farms—like Windmill Hill in the heart of Bristol, which raises crops and a small flock of domestic animals—it's already possible to rebuild city soil so that it becomes again "a living organic thing, a basic and complex element in the life-support system." A local New York regionalist, Albert F. Appleton, talks about "a third round of cityscaping for the area"—to complete a system of open spaces for the metropolitan region started by Frederick Law Olmsted in the eighteen-sixties and seventies, and added to over a forty-year period by Robert Moses, beginning in the nineteen-twenties. Appleton, the conservation-committee chairman of the New York City Audubon Society, who has a knack for putting together projects in which government agencies and local citizens' groups share responsibilities—as will happen, for instance, at Dubos Point, a new city park and wildlife refuge on the southern edge of Jamaica Bay named in honor of René Dubos—is a noteworthy example of the spare-time regionalist: during the day, he works as a senior legal manager on the staff of New York State's deputy attorney general in charge of rooting out Medicaid fraud.

A balance of three forces seems to be giving the regionalists a rare infusion of energy and confidence: a new sense of urgency; recognition of an unexpected opportunity; and the impact of recent evidence that human beings need a countryside component in their everyday surroundings if they are to function effectively when it comes to learning, say, and recovering from an illness or an operation.

The nineteen-eighties development boom in this country—a "crescendo," according to Grady Clay, the dean of American planning writers, that "has gained the attention of a huge sector of the public that never noticed before"—has been getting noticed and creating concern in part because it's the first construction surge we've had since the beginning of what might be called America's post-interstate period. Since the early nineteenth century, the United States has put itself through a series of expensive clear-the-decks, we-want-the-whole-place-completely-done-over transportation changes that have no equivalent in any other nation. As soon as we had completed a network of canals, we abandoned most of them and covered the country with railroad lines. About a decade after the Second World War, we got tired of the railroads, by then an intricate and sophisticated array linking thousands of population centers, large and small, and decided to replace them with airports and a new national system of freeways. Now, thirty years later, at a cost of several trillion dollars, this enormous highway-building program is almost finished, and American road maps of the interstates, which run through every state except Alaska, show only a few short gaps: places where thin parallel black or red lines have yet to be overshadowed by broad bands of deep, rich blue.

Each change in the country's transportation system has changed the nature of its construction booms, by changing people's ideas of where it was convenient to have their workplaces (which must be convenient to transportation), where they could live (two or three hours, at the most, from work), and where they could go to get away from it all (something like a five- or six-hour radius from home)—time constraints that have themselves stayed more or less constant. The nineteen-eighties post-interstate boom suddenly, and for the first time, brought heavy development pressure on all sorts of settings simultaneously—center-city business and residential districts, older suburbs, shore areas, farmlands, resort communities, faraway deep woods—because, with the interstates in place, a resort town like Mount Pocono, in eastern Pennsylvania, a hundred and fourteen miles west of New York City, is only a two-hour drive, with any luck, from Manhattan, and so can become part of New York's "commuter shed."

Similarly, tiny towns up in the middle of Maine's north woods—Abbot Village, say, and Greeley Landing, and dozens more—have become part of the weekend, or "second home," belt around Boston, because they're about two hundred and fifty miles, or maybe just under a five-hour drive, away. Easterners began to realize the current extent of their second-home territory in February of 1988, when a French holding company, Générale Occidentale, decided to reduce its debt and sell almost a million acres of land in the Adirondacks, the northeast kingdom of Vermont, the White Mountains of New Hampshire, and the mountain ranges of Maine—private forest land that had always been open to the public for hunting, fishing, and camping. Developers were eager to buy in all four areas.

At the same time, some of the largest developers in the country have increased the size of their own operations, so that they can now think of taking on ten-thousand-acre, twenty-five-year-long "megaprojects," as they're called, such as the new city of Weston, Florida—sixteen square miles of farmland and ranchland, fifteen miles west of Fort Lauderdale that by 2013 will have forty-five thousand inhabitants, an airport, an eighteen-hole golf course, two thousand acres of lakes and waterways, and millions of square feet of offices and warehouses.

And there's a further complication. Because America's first post-interstate development boom is also a post-indus-

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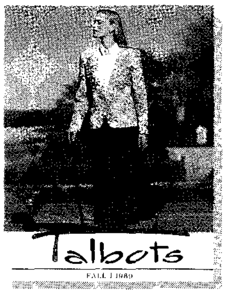

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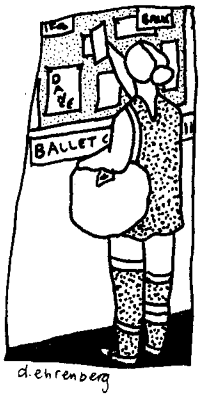
trial development boom, many white-collar workplaces that aren't directly dependent on raw materials are leaping out from the center cities, either into the suburbs or right past them onto the fields of the old working landscapes, beyond the farthest suburbs. Everything gets spread farther and farther out, and results in both reverse commuting—people live in the city and work in the suburbs—and suburb-to-suburb commuting. This puts the working landscapes within metropolitan areas at triple risk, because now they may be seen as immediately suitable sites for three kinds of development that used to arrive in stages: weekend homes, residential neighborhoods, and office districts. In this latest development era, "urban and suburban sprawl" is no longer descriptive, because the sprawl has been transformed into urban and suburban gobbling up and tearing at the ground, and it resembles the work of the great beasts of the last interglacial period, whose browsing destroyed large areas of thick forest.



Traditionally, most American development decisions have been made at the community level, and many of the places that most of us know best are a product of thousands of local choices made for hundreds of personal and local reasons—such as let's-buy-a-house and let's-start-a-business and let's-put-up-a-new-office-center and let's-bring-some-more-tax-dollars-into-the-area. What is new about conventional post-interstate development is that a national decision to switch transportation systems has spread these same makes-sense-to-me-personally and makes-sense-to-us-locally development decisions across huge regional expanses, on the optimistic assumption that, whatever happened next, they would inevitably continue to produce the things that all people need, such as stable communities, cherished surroundings, and opportunities for full and fulfilling lives.

Instead, of course, they didn't. The initial responses to post-interstate development have, however, included a completely new combination of countermeasures, some old, some unprecedented, some a blend of old and new: they include reaching out; moving in and standing fast; and taking stock and forming new partnerships. All these activities seem to have at least one common theme, whether it is put into words or remains implicit; namely, that something is in danger or is already missing, and something has to be done about it now. Many of the people involved, when they read about the national environmental disasters that made headlines during the summer of 1988 (record heat wave, prolonged drought, enormous forest fires, miles of East Coast beaches closed when medical waste washed ashore), had an odd feeling that they were only reading local or neighborhood news that had vaulted out of the back of the newspaper and onto page 1.

Reaching out is a community's first attempt to visualize, or somehow get some sense of, the size and shape and consequences of the post-interstate regions-in-formation, and to keep track of the pace of change in its own region. It's proving hard to do, because region-focussing, or region-tracking, devices are not an automatic component of American communities. New York City, for example, has traditionally boasted of the purity of its drinking water. New York now receives water from an area almost as big as Delaware, but what can you tell about the size or the shape or the condition of that area by drinking a glass of water in Manhattan? True, the taste in your mouth occasionally gives you one piece of information. Every so often, when there's a bad drought in the region—and bad droughts may occur a decade or more apart—New York City tap water tastes chlorinated, because then the city has to supplement the water it routinely gets from Westchester, from the Delaware River, and from the Catskill Mountains, a hundred miles northwest of the city, and start drawing water out of the Hudson River—water that needs more chemical treatment before it's safe to drink. And last year people with low salt tolerances were advised to reduce their consumption of New York water, because the rock salt being used by towns in the Catskills to keep their roads ice-free in the wintertime had been leaching into the city reservoirs in the area. You can't taste this salt yet, but it's predicted that within a few years New York City water will have taken on a permanent new flavoring unless the Catskill road crews make other arrangements for keeping their roads open.

Is there anything else in New Yorkers' daily lives that can help them form a sense of the size of the watershed that supplies the city? According to Ellen Airgood, a researcher who pulled together "mountains of factual material on New York City's water supply" for a nonprofit regionalist group called Scenic Hudson, which is interested in applying a landscape approach to new metropolitan development in the Hudson River Valley, it's hard for almost anyone to get a firm two-dimensional fix on the watershed, or even to be certain how far away the edge of the watershed is—especially since the edge shifts whenever water-use levels in the city rise or fall. But, she says, many New Yorkers can easily gain a good idea of their watershed's third dimension whenever they're within sight of the Empire State Building, because the world's third-tallest building (the Empire State's current ranking among skyscrapers) is a sort of standing depth gauge of the whole watershed; that is, the most distant springs whose waters are sent on to New York emerge from the ground at heights about on a line with the television-transmission tower on top of the Empire State. Or, to put it another way, if all the water flowing into the city had to stay in New York, and couldn't sink away into the sea, the city would eventually lie at the bottom of a lake as deep as the Empire State is high, with only the tops of the World Trade Center towers showing above water. (They're tied for second-tallest, below the Sears Tower, in Chicago.)

Putting the third dimension at people's disposal may be made easier in the future through some experimental techniques that the Environment Division of the Regional Planning Institute for the Île-de-France is developing in Paris. According to Raymond Delavigne, the director of the Environment Division, the generation of earth-observation satellites—including Landsat TM and SPOT—that was first put into orbit in the early nineteen-eighties may make it possible to keep track of regional changes by means of space-based "remote sensing," as it's now called. Pictures of the Paris area taken by a previous satellite, Landsat MSS, he says, were not as useful as had

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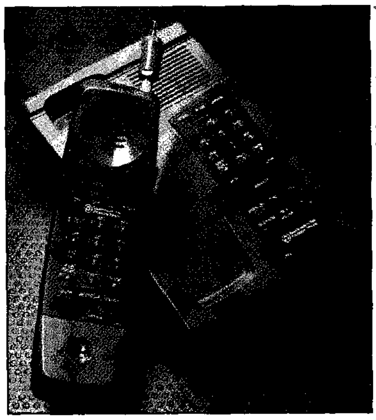

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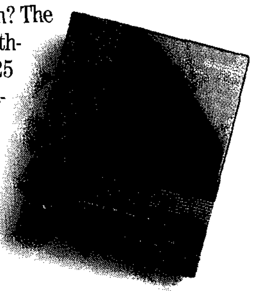

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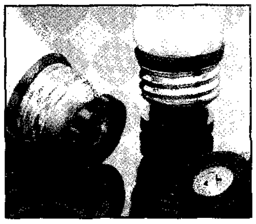

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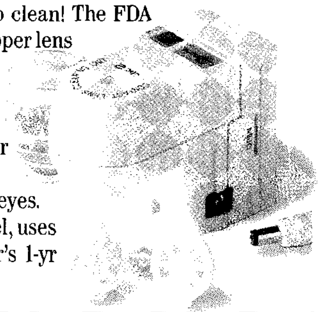

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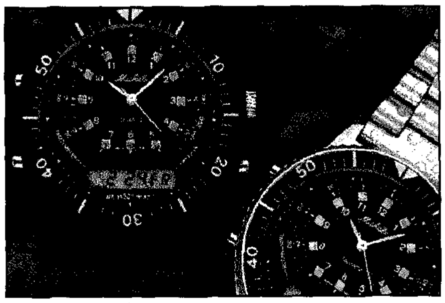

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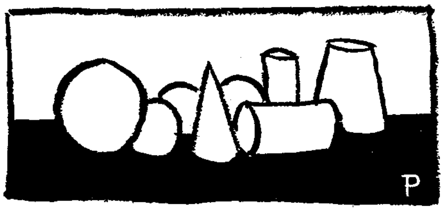
been hoped, because the MSS scanner wasn't sophisticated enough to pick up all the components of an "urban fabric . . . characterized by a mixture of heterogeneous objects of small size." But Landsat TM is equipped for the first time with devices that track a more extensive array of visible light and other electromagnetic radiation reflecting off the surface of the earth—and as a result some images of the Île-de-France that were beamed to earth by Landsat TM on April 30, 1984, were later checked against eighty test sites on the ground and were found to reveal not only what was forest, what was farmland, and where there were buildings but also the relative age of the buildings, the shadows cast by high buildings, and whether the soil around them drained well.

In my office I have a couple of Delavigne's spaced-based pictures that he has had blown up to poster size—the 1984 Landsat TM shot of the whole Paris region and a 1986 SPOT picture of one section of the southwestern quadrant of the Île-de-France, which shows a number of the heterogeneous components of the area. Versailles, with its ornamental gardens and radiating paths, is near the middle of the picture, and you can clearly see the intersecting arms of the mile-long artificial lake behind the château; five miles southwest, and considerably bigger than Versailles, is the "new city" of Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, a planned community of office towers, shopping centers, apartment buildings, factories, and schools, which went up on open fields in the nineteen-sixties as part of a project to relieve overcrowding in Paris; south of Saint-Quentin stretches the still farmed valley of the Chevreuse River, an ancient and prosperous working landscape, where the playwright Racine went to school, along a small tributary of the Seine; and at the bottom of the picture is one edge of an enormous national forest, the forest of Rambouillet—it's almost as big as the more celebrated forest of Fontainebleau, over in the southeastern part of the Île-de-France.

Delavigne's SPOT picture takes some getting used to; it has been color-enhanced to emphasize the forested areas, and every patch of woodland is a bright scarlet, whereas open water, like the cross-shaped lake behind Versailles, shows up as a dark forest green. Fields are more fieldlike—they're either white or light green—and the built-up areas are a pale dove gray. Most of the colors in the Landsat TM picture are closer to reality: Paris is a glowing gray, almost pewter-colored at its heart, the forests are dark green, and the farmland strips are soft green and pale beige. The only oddity in the Landsat view is the lakes—they're a vivid emerald green. Unless you have a trained eye, you can't look at these pictures and learn much about shadows or about how much water the ground will be able to absorb, but when you put the two pictures—taken two years and three months apart—side by side, one feature emerges with amazing clarity. The satellites allow you to see the shape of development as it flows across the landscape: beige fields to the east of Saint-Quentin in the earlier picture have turned gray with buildings in the second.

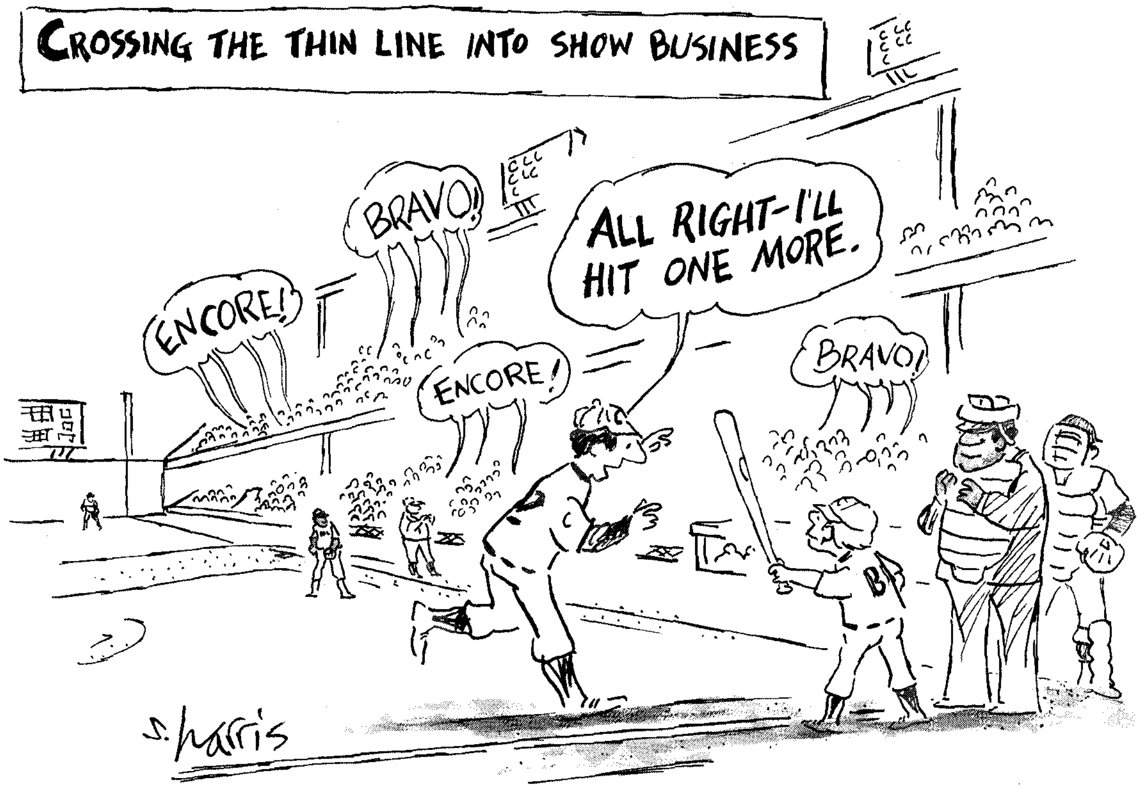
Now three years have gone by since that second picture was taken. What would a new picture of the same area show? Or pictures taken every few months? Just how frequently do you need to look at the spread of development in order to measure its pulse speed? Philip Lewis, a landscape architect at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, who has been tracking American development patterns for years, would like every region to have at least one place within its borders fitted out with all the technologies that can bring into focus for its people both the resources in their area and the forces acting on them; Regional Discovery Centers is the name he proposes for the observatories. They could bring regionalists together and begin to answer the questions that pop up as soon as people start to see just how much information there is about the connectedness of places.

Other types of response to development pressures are emerging among people who want to stay where they are. There's the "slow-growth movement," for instance—a coalition of environmentalists and homeowners that sprang up a few years ago in some of the well-to-do Southern California suburbs that retired couples have recently started avoiding. This coalition (it includes a group named Not Yet New York) is already winning local elections and attracting national press coverage with a simple message: that there is a demonstrable link between private property values and public health—and equally strong links between these two factors and the ease of physical mobility within a region, the region's economic security, and the resilience and well-being of its natural environment.



The California Association of Realtors reports that more than a hundred slow-growth plans have been put before California voters in local elections in the last three years alone, and most of them have been adopted, including a 1986 proposal that placed limits on new commercial development in San Francisco. Other West Coast cities outside California—including Seattle, Portland, and Vancouver, British Columbia, have approved similar downtown-growth-control measures. "We were people who had worked hard to put together enough money to buy a home, only to find that it was sitting atop poison," says Ruth Galanter, the first slow-growther elected to the Los Angeles City Council. Also, slow-growthers point out that the amount of money you can hope to sell a home for can decline by as much as twenty-seven per cent if the trees around the house have been cut down. And, according to H. H. Humphrey, Jr., of Short Hills, New Jersey, who is in the business of recruiting senior executives to jobs in the New York area, "if we make it so difficult for people to live in the suburbs and commute to New York, there is only one thing that can happen: the real-estate value of our homes and our largest investment will go down."

In the elections of November, 1988, a nonbinding ballot question asked Cape Cod voters what they thought about the idea of taking development-approval power away from the fifteen town governments on the Cape and giving it to a new, Cape-wide regional-land-use commission, which would be authorized to turn down any new construction project that might damage the area's natural environment, water supplies, or coastline. A freeway now runs along two-thirds of the Cape Cod peninsula—from the shoulder to the elbow of this sixty-mile-long arm of Massachusetts land.


CROSSING THE THIN LINE INTO SHOW BUSINESS
BRAVO!
ENCORE!
ALL RIGHT-I'LL HIT ONE MORE.
ENCORE!
BRAVO!
S. Harris

And although large stretches of the Cape's beaches and duneland have been protected from development for some years, as the Cape Cod National Seashore, which is a unit of the National Park System, the Cape's population increased by eighteen per cent during the first six years of the nineteen-eighties—nine times the growth rate in the rest of the state. The suggestion of a Cape Cod commission had been put forward only a few months before the Cape elections, by former Senator Paul E. Tsongas, and, in what a Barnstable town selectman called "the Tsonganista revolution," it was enthusiastically endorsed, by a three-to-one vote. Another nonbinding resolution, asking for a moratorium on all new construction until the commission could come into being—a request that Tsongas calls "the first shot of what will be the dominant issue in the next decade"—was approved by a two-to-one vote.

PRODDED by Tsongas, who says that "by the time we wake up and realize we are Long Island, it will be too late," the Massachusetts Legislature is expected to vote this fall on the proposal for a Cape commission. In the meantime, a number of states, including Maine, Vermont, and New Jersey, have established statewide regional-growth-management plans, in response to a new realization about development patterns resulting from the interstate-highway boom—one that is of special interest to governors and state legislators. The idea being expressed in state capitals—it's almost a "Just Say No" campaign directed at infrastructure—is that the interstate program, which started out as a single round of public spending on infrastructure, which didn't even cost very much at the state level, because the federal government put up ninety per cent of the money, is now requiring a second round of public spending that will be far more expensive to both states and localities, because once the interstates have pulled people and businesses out into the countryside they need more local roads and sewage lines and waste-treatment plants, most of which have to be completely paid for with state and local money. What regional-growth management does is limit new state spending for infrastructure except in those areas which are already densely populated, to keep current costs at manageable levels, and to avoid bringing on in a decade or two a third round of infrastructure spending, which states might find themselves unable to afford.

Oregon, which adopted a statewide growth-management plan in 1973 to channel new development to existing cities, contains sprawl by defining outer limits for each built-up area—urban growth boundaries, these city edges are called. And at least one state is now talking about setting up a new system of countryside zoning, known as existing-use zoning, which would protect working landscapes from speculators by making them areas where traditional businesses like farming and forestry would be designated as the only appropriate uses for such land.

Yet another way of standing fast in response to development pressures has been showing up in Rhode Island: in the spring of 1987, the legislature of this smallest of all states approved a sixty-five-million-dollar bond act chiefly for buying land to protect it as open space, and in the summer it went back into session to pass a bill that would permit the thirty-nine cities and towns in the state to approve open-space bond acts of their own. Thirty-four of the Rhode Island towns, including both the poorest ones and the richest ones, voted yes on these local initiatives, which added sixty-one million dollars to the sixty-five million made available statewide for buying undeveloped land.

In November, 1986, at a town meeting in Jamestown, a town of forty-five hundred people, there was a unanimous vote (five hundred and seventy-five to nothing) to spend two million one thousand dollars to buy a local golf course that developers were preparing to build on. And a year later at a special election Jamestown voted to spend another five million dollars to buy farms and woods and ponds all over town. This happened only a year after the legislature's 1986 approval of a sixteen-million-dollar open-spaces bond act, and only two years after the legislature voted for the first time in twenty years to spend any money on open-space acquisition: in 1985, when open-space protection was still considered an untested idea in the state, and a politically risky one, the legislators adopted a nine-million-dollar bond act. That's a hundred and fifty-one million dollars altogether, in just over two years—and not much less than the two hundred and fifty million dollars' worth of open-space financing that New York State voters agreed to in a 1986 election, though New York State has more than seventeen times as many people as Rhode Island (there aren't even a million Rhode Islanders) and is also more than forty times as big.

Robert Bendick, who has served as the director of Rhode Island's Department of Environmental Management for the last seven years, is still astonished by the outpouring of feeling on this subject in his state. He thinks that it could have happened only because in his state post-interstate development forces have run up against a newly mobilized group of landscape guardians—people who have chosen to stay behind. Before the beginning of the current development boom, Rhode Island had been losing great numbers of local families: between 1960 and 1980 thousands of people pulled up stakes and drove off on the new roads to the Sun Belt and other regions in search of better jobs and better conditions. "When this tremendous out-migration began to slow down, and people began to look around at what was left of the state, it turned out that the people who were still here were the people who loved Rhode Island," Bendick says. "They had at least as much interest in finding the best place for a good life as the people who had gone elsewhere—but why should they move when they had already found it? These people had a deep attachment to the towns and the land of Rhode Island, and to the heritage of that land, and in many cases they came from families who had cherished these same places, often for generations."

Then, when development did come, and the economy of Rhode Island, after fifty years of stagnation, began to share in the boom enjoyed by the two states next door, Massachusetts and Connecticut, the stay-behinds found themselves facing two different kinds of disruption of their connectedness to the land that meant so much to them.

"In Rhode Island, as in most Eastern states, most of the land has always been privately owned, but in our state no one ever felt the lack of the national parks we didn't have, or the national forests and other large public holdings that had never been established here," Bendick explains. "Why? Because, according to our own code of the countryside, an informal, unwritten tradition that was nevertheless widely acknowledged and accepted around the state, the owners of the farms and forests and shorelines of Rhode Island gave their neighbors the use of these places, so that private property functioned—very discreetly—as public open space. This tradition was perhaps a holdover from ancient land-use customs of common ownership and public access which the first European settlers in Rhode Island brought with them. But it began to be eroded, and then truncated, by the current wave of development, because now there were not only new buildings on a town's fields or near its beaches but also new owners, who didn't take kindly to trespassing. And people get much more excited about things they have enjoyed and are about to lose than they do about things they don't have—like national parks—but could have had if they had exercised some foresight. Loss of access made Rhode Islanders willing to throw their bodies in front of bulldozers—and helped persuade them to spend a great deal of money to do something about the situation."

What Bendick doesn't say is that he himself helped crystallize the open-space forces in Rhode Island, with one well-timed remark. Normally a self-effacing man, who does a good job of presenting facts to political leaders while keeping his own name out of the newspapers, Bendick in April, 1987 called a press conference in the statehouse rotunda and told reporters from the Providence papers, radio stations, and television stations that "the suburbanization of South County" was now a fact—South County being the formerly rural southern section of the state, where all the beaches are. This statement—a year before Paul Tsongas told the citizens of Massachusetts that Cape Cod was being suburbanized—was the first public acknowledgment by a responsible Rhode Island official of the changes that development was bringing to the state. Bendick also permitted himself one further remark: "We have five years to save all the lands in Rhode Island that are important to save."

Bendick's statement, like Tsongas's, proved to be a critical factor, for once these statements were presented on TV and in the papers the whole subject turned into something that people could talk about and do something about, and was no longer a silent and frightening nibbling away at the state that had to be mutely endured. Providence TV stations sent helicopters around the state and broadcast pictures of fields covered with tract houses and of barrier beaches cluttered with new condos on stilts. Within two years, Rhode Islanders were able to put together an unusual working coalition—bipartisan and apolitical—of environmental groups and government officials who agreed on the need to protect open space in the state, and backed up their plan by launching the largest per-capita open-space-financing program in the country.

Now Bendick is part of an environmentalist and government group that last year took on an even bigger task: the six-state New England Governors' Conference (Rhode Island's governor was the 1988 chairman) agreed to put together a list of all the unprotected open spaces and working landscapes within the region that New Englanders, by consensus, consider special places that help create the distinctiveness of their particular corner of the country—some of the peaks in New Hampshire's White Mountains, for instance, or farmland on Block Island, ten miles off the Rhode Island coast. Now that the list is complete, it will be used as a guide to regional identity, and can serve as part of a framework for future development throughout New England. The six governors have all endorsed the preservation of every place on the list. So far, no other region in the country has even taken on the job of identifying the places it has that function as region-makers, and Bendick hopes that the two-part regional-identity strategy that New Englanders have now devised—a commitment both to catalogue their own assets completely and, in the future, always to build around these characteristic places instead of on them—will, as it is put into effect over the next few years, disclose itself to be a simple-to-follow procedure that other regions can adopt during the nineteen-nineties.

IN addition to the newcomers to the countryside and old neighbors of the countryside who have been doing such stocktaking and reappreciating of open spaces and working landscapes, some of the original inhabitants of working landscapes in metropolitan areas—the farmers themselves—have been responding to post-interstate-development pressures by standing firm and renewing their vows to the earth: celebrating the land they work with, recruiting new partners for these old partnership landscapes, and diversifying into an array of crops, such as prize-winning table wines, that convert the treasures of a landscape into a currency more familiar to city dwellers. For farmers anywhere close to New York City, this is almost a last-ditch stand, a final attempt to hold together a pattern stretched almost to the breaking point. The future of the Klein farm in Queens, for instance, is more immediately threatened by events out on the East End of Long Island than it is by any changes within the city, because if the Kleins have to sell off their North Fork fields to developers they won't have a good-sized cropland left they can grow food on that's anywhere within trucking distance of their Fresh Meadows farm stand.

So far, thanks at least in part to the partnership action of some of the North Fork's farmers, and despite two new economic booms there and a recent environmental collapse, the North Fork—a twenty-five-mile-long, narrow, tapered, eastward-pointing triangle of land—is still holding fast, and its farms are still the most productive farms in New York State, raising crops worth tens of millions of dollars annually. ("Despite" and "still" are two words that come up repeatedly in North Fork conversations these days.) A mid-eighties second-home boom—of waterfront-lot startups next to newly dredged marinas, and of four-hundred-thousand-dollar "custom homes" stuck out in the middle of big, flat fields—has been spilling up from Westhampton, Hampton Bays, Southampton, and East Hampton, the now crowded vacation villages down by the Atlantic Ocean, a few miles to the south, that had previously annexed such a great part of the South Fork's farmlands and woodlands and wetlands and dunes and beaches. Minimalls and commercial strips of franchise stores and used-car lots—the second boom—are proliferating on freshly bulldozed and asphalted sites on the outskirts of diminutive seventeenth- and eighteenth-century North Fork towns, obscuring old-time Main Street views of newly whitewashed picket fences and modest white clapboard or weathered shingle cottages flying outsized American flags.

Until only a few years ago, the North Fork was mostly two working landscapes side by side—one on the land and one in the water on either side of the land—and these two managed areas were jointly maintained by farming families and fishing families and a few families who did a bit of both. And there are natural landscapes on the North Fork, as well: saltwater creeks, beaches, sand flats, freshwater ponds, woods, marshes—a startling variety of terrains and habitats, considering how intensively used the expanses of open land and saltwater have been down the years.

As recently as 1981, marine biologists marvelled at the pristine state of the tidal waters that form the East End's Peconic system: Flanders Bay, Great Peconic Bay, Little Peconic Bay, Noyack Bay, and Gardiner's Bay—a linked sequence of shallow estuaries which separates the North Fork and the South Fork. The Peconic system produced large quantities of bay scallops, oysters, clams, mussels, weakfish, striped bass, and bluefish until the summer of 1985. Then, for the first time, a brown tide of algae covered the bay, killing off all the scallops, most of the oysters, and many of the fish, and ruining a number of multi-million-dollar shellfishing and finfishing businesses. Each summer since, the brown tide has returned, and although the bay has been clear again this summer and last, there are still no bay scallops in Peconic Bay, and East End fish stocks are now probably about a third of what they were five years ago. The number of full-time baymen working the East End waters has declined by at least fifty per cent, and many of the remaining baymen "are barely hanging on," according to Arnold Leo, the secretary of a baymen's association on the South Fork.

These days, there is also heavier through traffic rumbling along Route 25,

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the main east-west road of the North Fork, and the only direct paved connection between Orient Point and the Long Island Expressway. Traffic has been increasing because New York State now lets bigger ferry boats dock at Orient Point: for over a century, there has been ferry service between the end of the North Fork and New London, Connecticut, which is only about fifteen miles northeast of Orient Point. In the past, the old ferries brought manageable numbers of Connecticut day-trippers and New England tourists down to the North Fork, but since the end of the Second World War, when the new boats, with their much higher car-carrying capacity, were put on the route, increasing numbers of long-distance New England drivers who make frequent trips to New York City or places south of New York—drivers who over the years have learned to loathe the almost constant congestion on Interstate 95, the Connecticut Turnpike—have started trying to save a few minutes on their over-all trip time by taking a left at New London across Long Island Sound and using the alternate route south. And yet the land component of the North Fork continues to function these days as a largely intact working landscape, with a special and evolving *partnership flavor all its own, and, as a* result, the North Fork has not been suburbanized—which, I suppose, may simply mean that, to use Paul Tsongas's phrase, it hasn't yet turned into Long Island.

So there's still good news today on the North Fork, despite everything, and one place you can hear about it is the front porch of the Wickham farm, in Cutchogue, on Great Peconic Bay. Like the big house on the Klein farm in Fresh Meadows, the Wickham's old farmhouse overlooks sloping land, and its front porch, like the front porch of the Klein house, has a small roof supported by two white columns, with two white wooden benches facing each other on either side of the front door. There is a more breathtaking view beyond the broad lawn in front of the Wickham house: a thick, low-growing orchard of semi-dwarf apple trees over on the right; a big, green-roofed barn straight ahead, with two little square cupolas perched on top; and, on the left, a glimpse of open water in the distance—Wickham's Creek, an inlet of the bay.

AN OLD TREMBLING

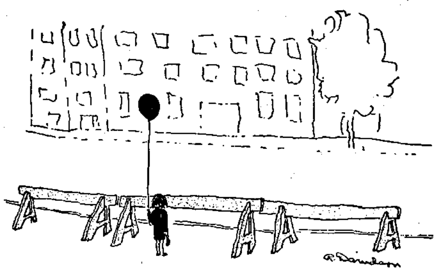
Often one wonders what the snake does all day in its pit
to so successfully keep away hands
and be left alone like a solitary zipper
encircling some space from which it has squeezed out all the light
it would seem,
as if no other creature could so love the dark during the day.
And everyone knows about the kiss of the snake.
And everyone knows about the eyes of the snake.
In its mouth is the blue light of old milk.
On its tongue is a map of red rivers.
It knows your body, your own body, like its own.
It begins with your foot, lurking in a boot,
and ends in the venomous sweat of the heart
if you bother it. But whoever leaves alone
whatever in nature wishes not to be disturbed,
he or she will seem like a god,
so unlike a human being,
even to a snake.

—MARVIN BELL

• •

The Wickhams own two hundred and seventy acres of land, and on two hundred and twenty of these acres they raise twenty-two different crops—figures that don't begin to suggest the diversity and inventiveness of their undertakings. They grow at least seventy-five varieties of apples, and at least seventy-five types of peaches. When I met John Wickham, the eighty-one-year-old patriarch of the family, last September, *and he invited me to sit* down across from him on his front porch, I found myself thinking of old Adam Klein, a man who must have had the same kind of impressiveness John Wickham has. Wickham is a tall, strong, slow-speaking, white-haired, clear-eyed man who has remained trim. Except for Sunday mornings when he goes to church, he wears high-topped working shoes and no socks, because that way, he says, his feet toughen up, and then stay warmer in wintertime.

When you talk to John Wickham, you realize that on his farm every farming action furthers a number of interconnected partnership purposes at the same time. In the first place, Wickham says, working North Fork land is endlessly fascinating, and you feel privileged every day, because the rich soil and a protecting microclimate make it ideally suitable for agriculture, so that the land seems almost eager to be farmed. "The land is willing," Wickham says. "It's an irreplaceable situation. The soil is very, very productive, and, particularly here in Southold"—Cutchogue is one of the *old villages within Southold, the main* North Fork town—"where no place is more than a mile and a half from saltwater, you can have two or three harvests a year, and pick Brussels sprouts well into December. And, at least on our place, where we're fortunate enough to have a saltwater creek on either side of our fields, in the days when we used to grow cauliflowers, two years out of every three we could still take them out of the field for the Christmas market, and in one year out of every three they would keep growing for another week, and we could harvest them for the New Year's market."



Wickham thinks of himself as only the most recent of fifteen or more generations of North Fork farmers—because Cutchogue was the site of extensive Indian squash, bean, and corn fields for perhaps hundreds of years before English families from the Colony of New Haven began farming the same fields, in the sixteen-forties. Plows turning over the soil out in the Wickhams' melon fields still occasionally bring up fragments of unglazed

Indian pottery. Inside his house, Wickham gestured to an apple-size stone with scallop-shell markings that was sitting on a bookshelf—a stone of the sort that Cutchogue Indians had used to break open oyster shells. "Look what came up one day with a load of potatoes!" he said.

The Wickham family, down the years, has several times had to find new ways of remaining a part of the North Fork. The first Wickhams got to Cutchogue from the South Fork in 1698—John Wickham has a deed with that date on it hanging in the hall behind the front porch—and soon prospered. By the time of the American Revolution, they owned over two thousand acres of North Fork land, but all of it was taken away from them after the war, because the head of the family at the time, Parker Wickham, who was also supervisor of the town of Southold, was a loyalist sympathizer. "Just two families east of Brooklyn were tainted," Wickham says. "Both had large holdings, which were entirely confiscated and auctioned off. The other family, like most of the loyalists who were punished for their beliefs, resettled in Nova Scotia, and their descendants live there today, but the Wickhams chose another course. Parker Wickham himself was banished to Connecticut by the New York State authorities, but the rest of our family stayed on, partly because they always felt that the confiscation had been engineered by local enemies of Parker Wickham, who didn't care about his beliefs but used them as an excuse to settle old scores. The family also stayed in place because they had loyalties to the land and to the area that went beyond their faithfulness to a lost political cause. The next several generations worked on getting the land back."

For North Fork farmers of John Wickham's generation, development pressures have added a special urgency to the job of making a farm pay for itself, and third-generation Polish-American and Irish-American farming families, as well as longer-established farmers, like the Wickhams and the Lathams and the Tuthills, have had to look hard to find new ways to keep going, so that, as a number of them have said, they won't be remembered as "the generation that sold the land." For many established North Fork farming families, this has meant getting out of the potato business and the cauliflower business—the old mainstays of the area—and starting to raise plants that can be sold for higher prices. Some North Fork farmers now grow sod, or ornamental shrubs such as rhododendron; some are growing specialty crops, such as sorrel, baby carrots, and yellow cherry tomatoes, that they can sell directly to the public at their own farm stands; some have built greenhouses, so that they can grow year-round crops, such as potted geraniums, or springtime crops, such as early tomatoes. "You've got to keep broadening your base," John Wickham told me last fall. The Wickhams first put up a greenhouse when John Wickham was almost sixty, and they now grow thirty thousand pounds of hothouse tomatoes every year in two greenhouses before their field tomatoes get ripe, in July. And John Wickham told me he has found indoor tomatoes "fascinating plants—much more demanding than chrysanthemums or roses ever could be."

Other North Fork farmers have had

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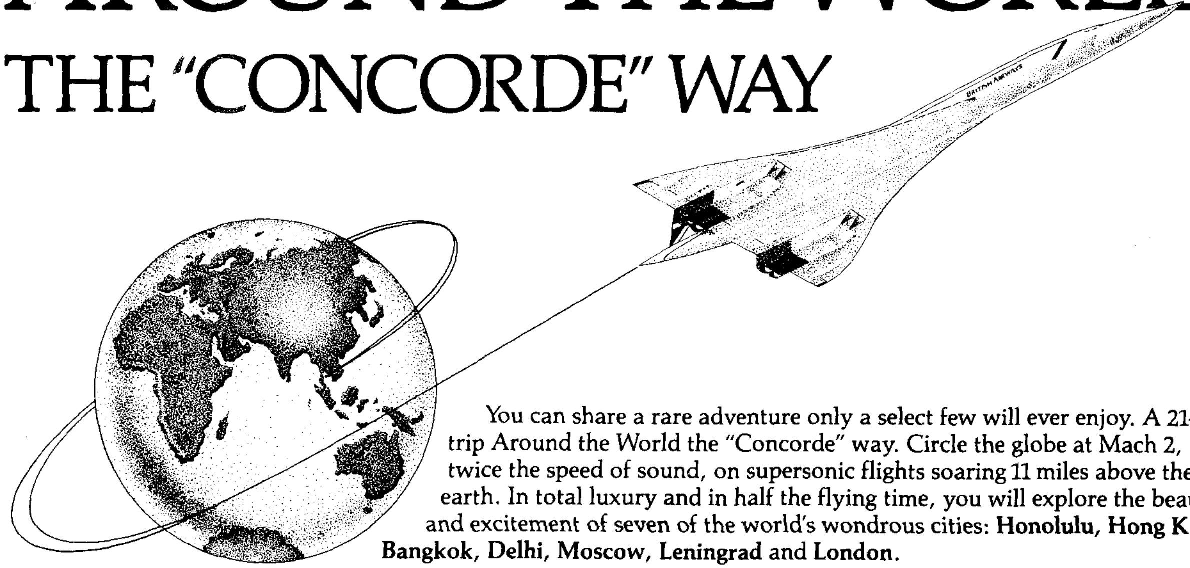

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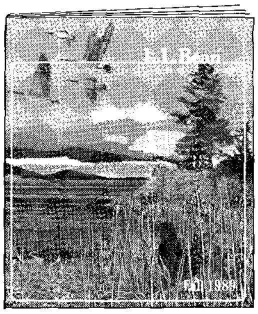

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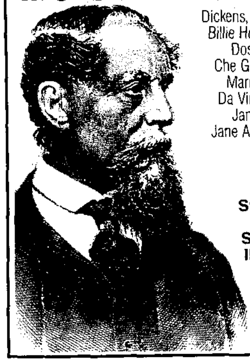

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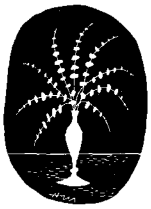
a harder time adapting to new ways. "It's an emotional type of thing that means spring without spring plowing," William Talmage, a Riverhead farmer whose family went into the greenhouse-geranium business after raising potatoes for almost a hundred summers, told a *Times* Long Island reporter last year. "I try not to think it's a personal failure because other generations were able to grow potatoes and make money at it. But you have to know when to quit, and that day came for me when I saw that a five-pound bag of ice was selling for more than a five-pound bag of potatoes. That meant the water I was using to irrigate my fields was worth more than my crop." At the same time, Talmage thinks of himself as a success—or, at least, as an interim success. "I'm proud of what I've been able to bring about," Talmage said at one point in his interview. "Those three acres of greenhouse have paid my bills and preserved the rest of the farm." At another point, he said, "Our family has an unwritten moral. To use the land to make a living, and then pass it on. Maybe I'm not smart enough to grow food and make money at it, but maybe my son will be. What I can do is pay the taxes and support the family and buy time until the times change again."



Sometimes the changes that a North Fork farmer helps bring about buy time for people who are not blood relatives. John Wickham, for instance, served for years as chairman of the Southold Town Planning Board, and in the nineteen-seventies the board helped set up an innovative twenty-one-million-dollar Suffolk County farmland-preservation program, the first of its kind in the country, which has over the last decade kept sixty-five hundred acres of farmland—about a seventh of the remaining county farmland—in production by buying up what are called the development rights to the land. Essentially, the county strikes a bargain with farmers and pays them the difference between the price of the land as farmland and what a developer would be willing to pay for it. In return, the farmers agree never to develop their land, and anyone they sell to is bound by the same pledge. The county also agrees to continue taxing the farms as farmland. John Wickham enrolled in the county program early, putting more than half his land under development restrictions at a time when some of his neighbors were still wondering whether the program's only real purpose was to confiscate part of the value of their property. In more recent years, the town of Southold inaugurated a two-million-dollar farmland-preservation program of its own. None too soon, it turns out: some land prices in Southold have gone up fifty per cent in the last two years alone.

Twenty-five years ago, when John Wickham was already broadening his base, he planted a few table-grape vines because he had a hunch they might do well on the North Fork. The hunch was right: the grapes flourished immediately, and, although table grapes have never become one of the largest Wickham crops, the Wickhams have kept on planting vines here and there ever since, and now have about seventy-five varieties of grapes growing on their land. Almost seventeen years ago, a young couple, Alex and Louisa Hargrave, who had an idea that they might like to start a business together as winemakers, happened to pay John Wickham a visit, heard him talk about the North Fork soil, the North Fork microclimate, and the North Fork growing season, and took a look at some of his grapevines. Alex Hargrave had been working in publishing, and he had a master's degree from Harvard in Chinese studies, but a back operation kept him off his feet for a number of months, and during his recuperation he and Louisa thought it would be enjoyable to find work that would keep them in the same place all day.

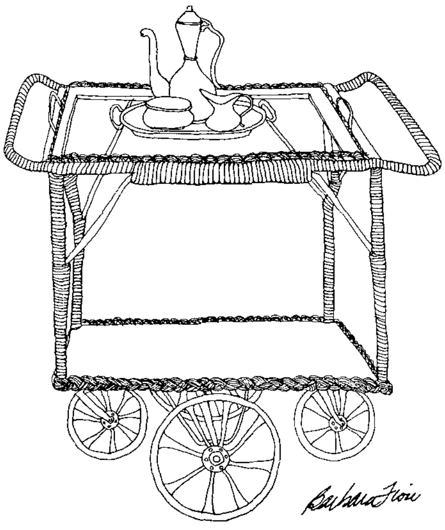
Soon after their call on the Wickhams, the Hargraves in 1973 bought a sixty-four-acre potato farm only a quarter of a mile from the Wickham farm. There they started planting vinifera grapes, the best European wine grapes, on a gently sloping forty-five-acre field, and opened the first commercial winery ever established on Long Island. The Hargraves released their first wines—a small bottling of Pinot Noir and Cabernet Sauvignon—in 1977. The early Hargrave wines were a quick success, winning medals at various New York fairs and tastings and getting such a warm welcome from wine writers that other farmers—and even a few investors—started taking an interest in Long

Island winemaking. This year, there are ten wineries, and twenty-five vineyards, and more than a thousand acres of grapes on the East End of Long Island, almost all of them on the North Fork but some of them on land already protected by Suffolk County's farmland-preservation program.

So the future of the area as a winemaking region is not yet secure. Michael Zweig, an economist who teaches at the State University of New York at Stony Brook and has studied Long Island's wine industry, thinks that existing North Fork farmland-preservation programs, if they are "expanded and combined with large-lot zoning" of twenty-five acres or more, can protect agriculture in the area. "Wine grapes are a prime example of a new and economically viable direction for East End farming, although potatoes and other traditional crops will continue to be important as well," Zweig wrote in a recent report for the Southold town board and the Suffolk County Industrial Development Agency. Potatoes, he says, are actually making a comeback; two years ago, thanks to higher prices in the market, there was "a slight increase in potato acreage" on Long Island. But it is the wine industry that Zweig finds the "most promising." And he is willing to make an unusual claim. "The process which has so totally transformed the rest of Long Island in recent decades need not be repeated" on the East End, now that an alternative process is available, he declares. "Usually, the term 'developer' has connoted suburban residential, industrial, or commercial development, as though those economic activities were the only forms of progress," Zweig says. "On the East End, development can be driven by agriculture instead."

Several things will have to happen before Zweig's prediction can be realized. David Mudd, who is a North Fork vineyard manager, thinks the Long Island wine industry will gain a sound economic footing only after five or six thousand acres have been planted with grapes—three or four times as many as are planted with them at the moment. And, with that many more grapevines to look after and to harvest, the area will have to attract a larger number of professionally trained farmers to serve as vineyard managers and winemakers. A number of the winemakers now working on the North Fork have degrees in enology from the University of California's campus at Davis, where winemaking is studied as an exact chemical science. Davis is only about forty miles east of the Napa Valley. The only academic program in enology offered in New York State at the moment is upstate, at Cornell. Zweig has suggested that the North Fork base its economy solely on three working-landscape-related industries: agriculture, fishing, and tourism. Conventional commercial and residential development will only endanger the health of the three primary businesses, he says. He wants to see Southold establish a nine-thousand-acre "agricultural district," from which any other business would be rigorously excluded. "The rural character of the area is slipping away," Zweig has said. "Yet it is exactly a rural character that will attract, and then be sustained by, grape growing for premium wineries."

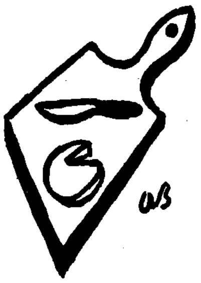
Ronnie Wacker, the president of the North Fork Environmental Council, warns that there is still no agreement on the North Fork about a number of key issues. Scientists are still debating whether the brown tide in Peconic Bay is a natural phenomenon or a result of pollution. There is also disagreement about the carrying capacity of the North Fork's aquifer, its sole source of fresh water. Although the municipal water-supply system of the North Fork is dangerously tainted with fertilizer runoffs, relies on old pumps, and draws from a source whose size no one really knows, Suffolk County four years ago ordered the village of Greenport to hook up new housing developments to the old system. "On the North Fork, we have just a single lens of fresh water," according to a trustee of the Greenport village board, David Kapell. "It's not like up west, where they can drill to a lower aquifer. If we go any lower, we hit salt. What I'm thinking about is that one hot July day when everybody is out here and they all turn on the water at once—and a pump breaks down."



Meanwhile, as Ronnie Wacker points out, the town board of Riverhead has approved three new construction projects along Saw Mill Creek, a two-and-a-half-mile-long freshwater wetlands system, emptying into Flanders Bay: Bridgewater Estates, to consist of a hundred and sixty-two condominium units and two office towers; Mill Pond Commons, to consist of one hundred condominium units; and the Cross River Project, to consist of at least three hundred and eighty condominium units, and has yet to vote on two more developments proposed for Saw Mill Creek, among them Peconic Park, a six-story hotel and convention center, and East End Commons, a shopping complex with three department stores. The North Fork Environmental Council, through its Legal Defense Fund, is now suing the Southold town board for adopting new zoning ordinances that fail to protect the town's most sensitive waterfront areas, and, according to the council, will inevitably kill farming, fishing, and tourism in the town.

And the North Fork community, Wacker would argue, has one paramount job to take on: protecting the public value—the "rural character," as Zweig calls the partnership sense of the place—that generations of villagers, baymen, and farmers have added, and are still adding, to the landscape that now supports and enfolds all the people of the area. Creating public value, Wacker says, is the only uninterrupted business venture the North Fork has ever known, and now the North Fork needs to devise a strategy for managing the future growth of its public value.

EVEN while the first post-interstate boom is still accelerating, many regionalists have gained an almost Wickham-like buoyancy after discovering that the coexistence of city and countryside—meaning both working countryside and natural countryside—in a single area is easier to bring about than we used to assume. If we're having to learn, that is, that no place is automatically immune from development pressures these days, we're also finding out that no place need ever be inevitably overwhelmed by development. Part of the learning process has to do with getting a better understanding of the nature of development by looking at it carefully over a period of time: what you find when you do this is that because development does cluster around the transportation and energy systems in a place—and, more specifically, around those parts of the infrastructure which are considered modern in any particular period—development pressures tend to have an uneven impact, producing overwhelming changes in one spot and none at all in a spot a mile or two away. For instance, there's the countryside opportunity presented by the Blackstone River Valley, between Worcester, Massachusetts, and Providence, Rhode Island—an area that happens to be one of Robert Bendick's favorite places in the world. (Bendick was the planning director of Woonsocket, an old Rhode Island industrial city on the Blackstone, north of Providence, before moving on to the state's Department of Environmental Management.)



The Blackstone River Valley, which is forty-three miles long and only a couple of miles wide—the river runs between two parallel ridges of hills on its way from Worcester to Narragansett Bay—was the first area in North America to be industrialized. Beginning in the seventeen-nineties, several decades before steam engines came into general use in this country, a succession of cotton mills was set up along the Blackstone—huge mills that used the waterfalls on the river to keep giant waterwheels turning with enough force to power their looms. The northern stretch of the river, the Massachusetts part, which is bordered by large and spectacular wetlands, stayed mostly undeveloped, but in Rhode Island mill villages dotted the hillsides. A canal was dug in the valley floor, on a course that ran parallel to the river, so that finished goods could be shipped downstream. Every town on the river was supported by a mill, and every waterfall on the river had a mill next to it, but even within this heavily industrialized corridor, development had only local effects on the landscape; any area that was beyond walking distance or out of range of a canal barge stayed as it had been.

Almost two hundred years later, the textile industry has abandoned the mills, but the hillside mill towns are still vital, and serve as bedroom communities for both Providence and Boston as well as Worcester and Woonsocket. Mid-twentieth-century industrial pollution in the cities along the Blackstone fouled the river's waters, but since the early seventies the states have spent a hundred and fifty million dollars to make the river clean again. An expressway from Providence to Woonsocket that runs about two miles west of the Blackstone is bringing a lot of new residential development to the ridge of hills just west of the Blackstone River Valley, but much of the valley itself is almost remote these days, almost a wilderness: between the villages and cities there are heavily wooded pockets, with a few old bottomland and hillside farms; the air smells sweet and stays cool all summer long, even when temperatures are soaring in Providence and Woonsocket; visitors find that they can't see any of the new development beyond the hilltops; and it's so quiet in these wild parts of the valley that the loudest noises are made by the waterfalls. Down there, Bendick says, you can't help realizing that human changes are often not as durable as we intend them to be, and that natural forces, left to themselves, prove to have a resilience and a regenerative power we often don't suspect.

A freight railroad, the Providence & Worcester, has tracks running through the Blackstone River Valley, and several two-lane roads run into the valley—each comes down one of the hills on one side, crosses a narrow bridge, passes an old mill, and goes up the other side—but no continuous road has ever been built down the length of it, and if you don't have friends who work for the P. & W. the only way to get from one end of the Blackstone River Valley to the other is by canoe. And the valley, though it is surrounded by an almost unparalleled development boom, of far greater intensity than the mill boom of the seventeen-nineties and through the end of the nineteenth century, has become almost an invisible place and is now practically unknown to its neighbors in the once poor and now prosperous countryside next door. Development, then, can be self-focussing, and can have an impact on people's mental maps of the landscapes near them even when it leaves the landscapes themselves untouched.

Bendick plans to use his discovery about development impacts, along with two other new pieces of information about landscape use, to open up the Blackstone River Valley for local recreational use and, at the same time, to initiate a change in regional and national recreational habits. Bendick says that, while he has been working on the New England Governors' Conference's list of special places throughout the six New England states, it has become obvious to him that many of these places are already part of "use patterns" that have become truly regional in scope. "Nearly everyone in New England, if you ask him to name a favorite area for skiing, or for hiking, or for looking at autumn leaves, will mention Vermont's Green Mountains, either right away or after a minute or two," he says. "And other, equally well-known scenic areas, such as Acadia National Park, in Maine, or the Presidential Range of the White Mountains, are now getting such overwhelming use, and the volume of people using them compared with the number of acres available is so staggering that you just can't conceive of how to deal with it all. Except, perhaps, by siphoning a bit off here and there and rearranging things to make the East Coast a bit more like the West Coast and the mountain states, so that adventures outdoors in this part of the country are not so far away anymore from our own front doors.

"Rhode Island has already started to build a fourteen-mile bicycle path along the Blackstone River, which will bring people into the area, and we're also working with Massachusetts parks people and with the National Park Service on projects they're thinking about. The Park Service is involved because three years ago Congress designated the entire Blackstone River Valley a National Heritage Corridor, which doesn't make the area a national park or a federal property but does mean that the national government is willing to try to coördinate the thinking of the two states and the twenty local communities involved. But what

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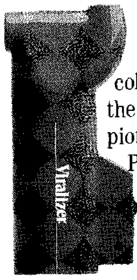

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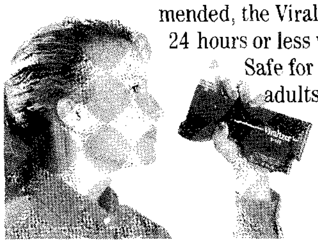

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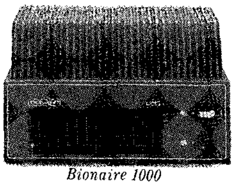

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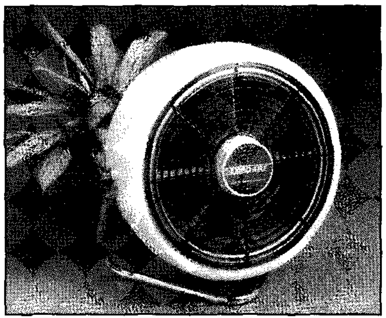

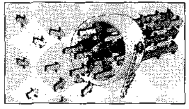

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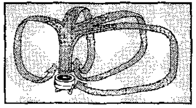

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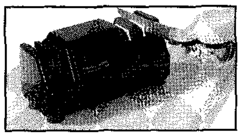

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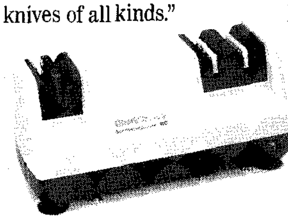

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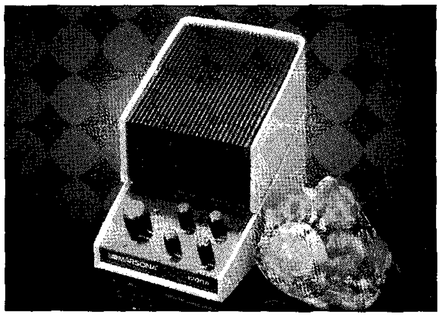

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Bendick goes on, "People get itchy to get out of the house and into an encounter with the countryside, and if nothing has been provided for them nearby they'll go travel some distance. But when they're given the choice they'll usually stay in their own area. If we could provide mini-adventures in and near the major New England cities, we could take some of the pressure off the Green Mountains and the White Mountains, and also off the special places outside New England that draw a national or an international crowd, such as the Grand Canyon or, closer to home, New York State's great wilderness park, the Adirondack Park—the largest American park in the first forty-eight states. The Grand Canyon had three and a half million visitors in 1987 and nearly four million visitors in 1988—a ten-per-cent increase in just one year. There's a five-year waiting list for private rafting trips through the Grand Canyon, and when you do get a chance to ride the rapids out there you find chartered airplanes and helicopters roaring overhead almost all day long.

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Twenty years ago, William H. Whyte noticed a facet, or quirk, of people's ordinary perceptions about development in the countryside—a seemingly built-in tendency closely related to Bendick's discovery about the cloak of invisibility that development sometimes casts over adjacent landscapes. Whyte's name for this phenomenon was "tremendous trifles." He thought that it opened up great opportunities for protecting natural landscapes and working landscapes, because simply by changing the focus of people's attention you could make it clear to them, even during a development boom, that there is considerably more countryside at hand than they thought. Where Bendick saw development pulling people's attention away from any piece of countryside out of the reach of the transportation infrastructure, Whyte saw that people also start to discount a landscape, and lose their sense of connectedness to it, as soon as even a few blemishes crop up. In other words, you can make people look away either by not calling attention to yourself at all or by having a spot on your sweater.

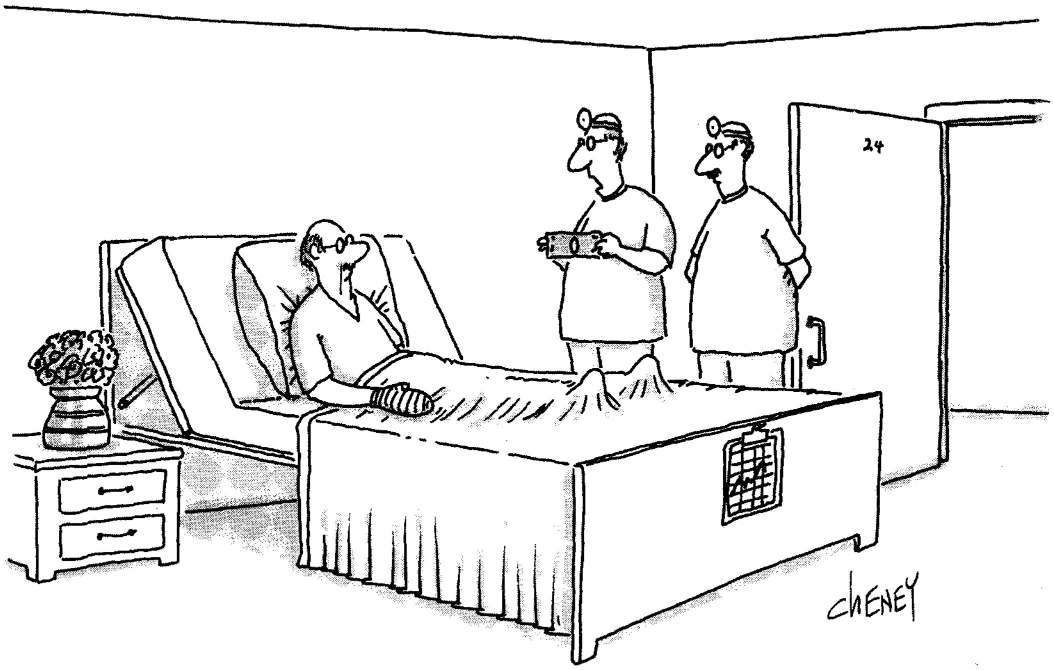
Albert F. Appleton, the chairman of the New York City Audubon Society's conservation committee, has even come up with a rough mathematical formula to measure landscape degradation: "The first five per cent of development in a countryside region generally does fifty per cent of the damage, in terms of altering people's mental geography of an area," he says. "And the second five per cent of development enlarges this damage by another fifty per cent. The environmental damage caused by the first development in a region varies tremendously from place to place, depending on the nature of the terrain and the kind of development involved, but the disproportionate initial-impact formula seems to apply across the board."

The precise numbers might change from one boom to the next, but there was also welcome news here, Whyte thought. "In these disproportions lie great opportunities," he wrote. "If relatively small elements of the scene have such a leverage effect, relatively small actions can, too. A scenic clearing to open up a meadow, a row of sycamores planted along a river bank, a screen of signs removed at the crest of a hill: individually, such projects seem trivial." But taken together, "these tremendous trifles can have a major impact on the environment."

It's all a matter of dovetailing uses so that they're brought closer together in an area without diminishing its public value. For instance, as Whyte explains, "open space . . . and the effect of open space are not quite the same, and . . . effect is more important." The public value of a place gets maintained by treating cause and effect as separate variables—so that "the more crowded landscape of tomorrow can be made more pleasing, more expansive, more green, than the relatively more open one of today. No technological breakthrough is necessary—the spade and the saw have been invented. What is necessary is a systematic effort by communities to look at their landscapes—as most people see them most of the time." What every community needed, in other words, was a systematic assessment of its own landscape character, an inventory of the connectedness it has—and of any broken connections that need mending. Working with the "tremendous trifles—the brook by the side of the road you do not see for the second growth, the wall that hides the skyline," Whyte warned, might not seem like "the grand-sweep approach to regional design," but it's the job that awaits us, because "in the aggregate, it is the host of small pictures and the perception of them that is, for people, the true regional design."

What might a greener and more pleasing but more crowded natural landscape or working landscape look like? The easiest way to find out, according to Richard R. Gardner, a land-use expert with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, in Washington, who has an intimate knowledge of many of the back-country roads in the mid-Atlantic states, is to go see one that already exists; and Gardner, after some systematic wandering, has found a Pennsylvania landscape of tomorrow—or, at least, a fraction of one—in southern Lancaster County: a stretch of working landscape where, more than eighty years ago, a hulking new piece of transportation infrastructure was installed in a way that respects small pictures and ordinary perceptions. The place is a pretty little valley of farms—most of the farmers are Old Order Amish—about ten miles long, running east to west, and about a mile wide, and most outsiders don't know it, because it's about ten miles south of the principal Amish settlements in the region.

And many of the visitors it does get don't notice its secret, so cleverly have the small pictures been constructed. Gardner himself came across the place only because he invented a hobby several years ago, which was to get in his car on a weekend or a few days off and head for New York City but try to make the entire two-hundred-and-thirty-seven-mile trip over a route pieced together solely out of two-lane rural roads. The goal was never to get onto a major highway. So far, he has been able to track down half a dozen rural routes through the Northeast Corridor that have only a few gaps in them, and last summer he offered to drive me out to the unknown valley so I could see it for myself.



"This, Mr. Brillton, is what we found lodged in your fist."

• •

The valley, whose official name seems to be Valley—the stream that runs through it is called Valley Run, and the road that parallels the stream is called Valley Road—has the small town of Quarryville at its west end and the smaller town of Christiana at its east end. Most of its land is sloping meadows and cornfields and pastures, framed by two gentle waves rolling across a calm, green sea of landscape; that is, there are rounded hills to the north, then a smooth dip down to the valley floor, and then an equally effortless bobbing up toward the same kind of rounded hills to the south. There are a few groves of trees, some long hedgerows, and several big white barns. When Gardner pulled his car over to the side of the road, we were both struck by the quiet of the place, and by the timelessness it evoked: since most of the Old Order Amish have never started using cars or tractors, there was almost no machinery to listen to; and since most of them also don't use electricity, there were no electric poles or telephone poles along many of the two-lane roads that cross the valley. The roads are paved, but otherwise the valley still looks much the way it has since German farmers first settled here, in the first part of the eighteenth century. Occasionally, an Amish horse and buggy passes by.

Gardner, who has something of a magician's flair, drove on and then stopped again, without saying anything, a few feet from one of the long hedgerows. We were close to a small bridge, which, I assumed, crossed the Valley Run. We still hadn't seen anything that hinted at the presence of any major public-works projects. Gardner stretched, strolled out onto the bridge, and leaned his arms on a steel guardrail at one side. When I joined him and looked down, I was jarred to find myself staring at a wide, well-maintained two-track freight-railroad right-of-way running along a deep, straight cut in the ground eighteen feet below the bridge. What I had thought was a hedgerow was in fact a line of trees that had been planted to conceal the lip of the cut and two rows of tall utility towers flanking the tracks. These trees made such an effective screen that as soon as I stepped off the bridge and walked a few feet down the road I was no longer aware of being anywhere near a railroad.

Back on the bridge, Gardner began telling me about this concealed railroad—the Low Grade Line, as it's called, one of the most ambitious construction projects ever undertaken by the old Pennsylvania Railroad. "The Low Grade Line was part of the master plan for the railroad mapped out in its glory days at the turn of the century by its greatest president, A. J. Cassatt, whose younger sister was Mary Cassatt, the painter," Gardner said. "It was A. J. Cassatt who built the original Penn Station in Manhattan, which gave greatness to the Pennsy as a passenger railroad. And the Low Grade Line, as he conceived it, would have transformed the freight end of the business as well, taking freight trains off the steep grades of the heavily used and circuitous main-line tracks."

In Cassatt's grand design for the Low Grade Line, no curve between New York and Chicago would ever be sharper than two degrees and no slope steeper than one degree, and the entire line would be completely grade-separated. The Pennsylvania leg of the line was built, and so was a second section, in Ohio, both of them running over fairly level ground, but Cassatt died before the next part of the project, which would have involved tunnelling through the Alleghenies, could get started, and in later years the whole enterprise was postponed and finally shelved.

As Gardner told the story to me, "The great achievement of the Low Grade Line is a railroad that is practically a straight line and almost a flat plane, and never comes into direct contact with other types of vehicles, because all the roads and highways that meet it pass either over it or under it, on bridges or through tunnels. The

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existing Pennsylvania segment of the Low Grade Line is now operated by Conrail, and one consequence of that change in management has been to make the Low Grade Line not quite as good a neighbor to the Amish as it once was, because Conrail, to save on operating costs, deëlectrified the line and now runs diesels through the valley. You still never see a train in the valley, but now you can hear it roaring toward you and past you—a sound that, once it has passed, only gradually dies away in the distance. Of course, for Conrail managers the landscape is not a full partner in their business plans. And, like today's highway engineers, they have not been trained to listen to or look at whole landscapes—or even to recognize them."

IF Carole Neidich-Ryder can make her passion a reality, recognizing landscapes could become an easier task in a few years. Neidich-Ryder, who is a biologist on the staff of the Nassau County Recreation and Parks Department, on Long Island, and lives in a Levitt-built house in Hicksville, thinks that an opportunity now exists—by combining the established habits of her suburban neighbors, the landscape suggestions coming from a new school of American landscape designers known as the naturalizers, and some pioneering golf-course designs created by Karl Grohs, a West German landscape architect—to reconstitute the outlines of a lost landscape: the sixty-thousand-acre built-over Long Island prairie that used to be called the Hempstead Plains. "I have some very radical ideas," she says, "but I think it makes sense for everyone to pick one thing to fight over, and I've been living on the Plains since I was three, so I already know what they can do for people."

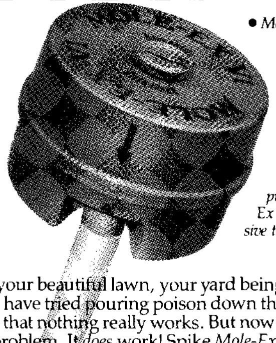
Officially, the Hempstead Plains are not quite a lost landscape, because there is now a sixty-acre Hempstead Plains preserve adjacent to the Nassau Coliseum, and, in addition, a nineteen-acre tract on the grounds of Nassau Community College that, biologically, has been determined to be a remnant of the Plains—though if you're not a grasslands expert it looks like just one more weedy, shrubby, overgrown Long Island lot. Neidich-Ryder wants to see both preserves fully restored. That means bringing back all the wildflowers that have disappeared and removing all the invasive shrubbery. But that's only the preliminary part of her plan. "There has always been a tremendous amount of open land in the Long Island suburbs—golf courses, campuses, and, in Levittown, a front yard and a back yard for every house," she says. "That's one part of it. Of course, all this land has traditionally had to have a distinctive look. Golf courses, for instance, with their sand traps and ornamental lakes, are fictionalized re-creations of the moors of Scotland, the countryside where the game was first played. And there are laws in most communities about how high the grass can grow in people's yards—usually four inches, or eight inches at the most. It used to be thought that an unkempt lawn meant that a property was being neglected, which made it a threat to real-estate values in the area.

"But the naturalizers, who are interested in saving the botanical heritage of different regions of the country, have recently demonstrated, first, that it costs a lot more to grow an imported species of ornamental grass than it does to raise the grasses that are natural to an area—grasses that are looked down on as ordinary old things but are part of the plant community that originally evolved successfully in that place. And the naturalizers have also shown that people get a lot more enjoyment out of looking after a taller lawn filled with wildflowers that change with the season. Karl Grohs, in Essen, West Germany, has been making the same discovery about golf courses—the game itself is played on only about thirty per cent of the land set aside for it, so there's plenty of room for the designer to make changes without obstructing the golfers. The tees and the greens are sacrosanct, of course, but when the rest of a *Golfplatz* is 're-natured,' as he says—that is, planted to be continuous with the existing landscape of an area—the game gets more exciting, because you're never in the same place twice when you play among surroundings that change from day to day. At least, that's what people tell him after they've played one of his courses, such as the new championship course in Düsseldorf. The first question a golf-course designer must ask, Grohs says, is not how many strokes to make a hole but what kinds of birds it should have, and what kinds of amphibians."

Neidich-Ryder thinks that Nassau County people could easily enough be brought around to the idea of welcoming home the Plains. "Now, I haven't yet talked to many Long Island golfers," she says. "But I know my neighbors, and that makes me think that out here we're ready to give a great number of our open acres back to the Plains. That's because in the suburbs front lawns are not for use. Using your front lawn is something you might do in the city, where you don't have enough space, and have to use every inch that's yours. In Nassau County, the back yard is where you live—it's where the kids play, it's where the barbecue is, it's where you hang the laundry out to dry—and the front yard's only purpose is to look beautiful and show off the house. We live the same way indoors: we keep the living room clean and watch TV in the den. To me, this means that almost half the land in Levittown is available to the Plains—as long as the grasses and the wildflowers don't grow too tall and hide the houses that we want you to see.

"And there's a reason for all this that goes beyond beauty and delight and not having to spend as much money or take care of the lawn as often. And that is that we now know that the Plains have an ecological function we didn't know about: they are the grass roof over and the principal component of the underground aquifer that supplies drinking water to all the towns in the county. We're all one family when we turn on the faucet, and I think that having the Plains outside again will start making it easier for me and my neighbors in Hicksville to realize that the people to the east of us, in Bethpage, are drinking what we drink, and we're drinking what the people up north, in Jericho, are drinking, and anything I pour into the water here will reappear in the houses down in Bellmore, six or seven miles south. This is something all my neighbors have always really wanted to know more about—after all, we came out here to have clean air and clean water. And it's ours. It just turns out that, as rooftop dwellers, we have to do our chores. And the chores turn out to include *not* mowing the lawn, and learning to live more lightly on the Plains." —TONY HISS

(This is the first part of a two-part article.)



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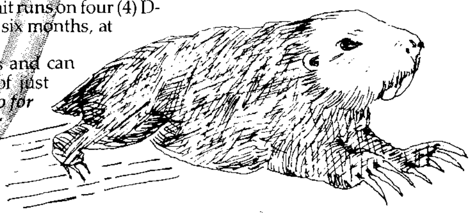

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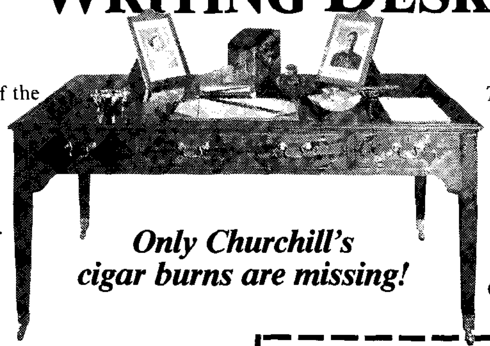

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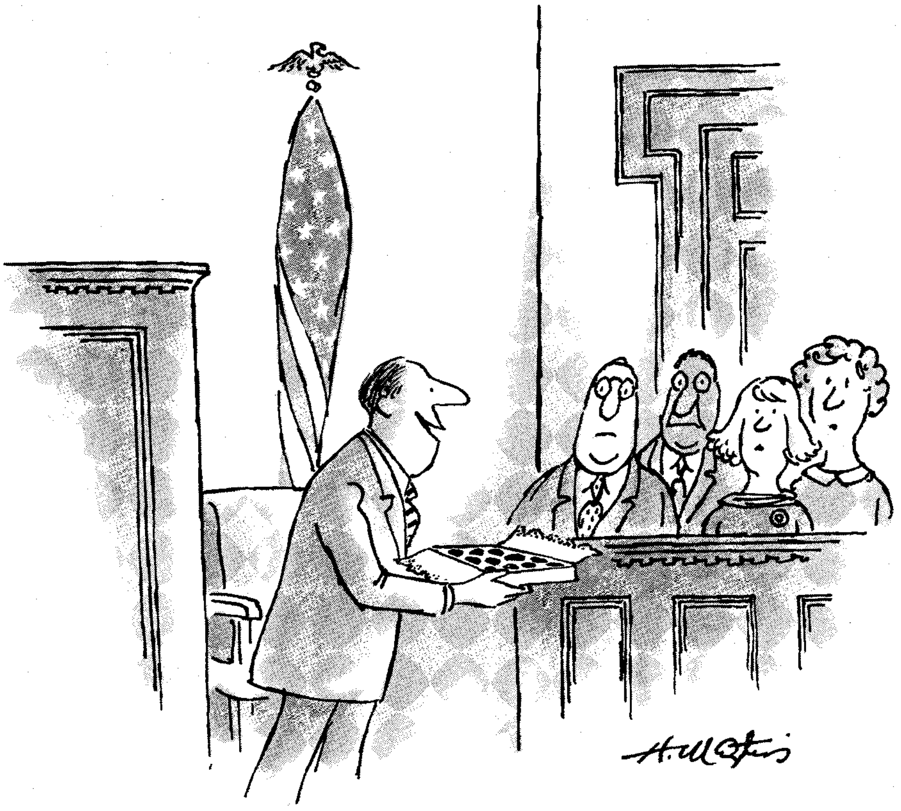
MUSICAL EVENTS

All-American Mozart

AT PepsiCo Summerfare in July and August—during the tenth, and last, "edition" of the festival that in the theatres of the Purchase campus of the State University has been giving New Yorkers a summer feast of music, theatre, and dance comparable in ambition and adventure to festivals that flourish in Europe—the three Mozart and Da Ponte operas, "Le Nozze di Figaro," "Don Giovanni," and "Così Fan Tutte," were presented *in chronological sequence, thrice, on* consecutive days. (The cycles were preceded by some individual performances of "Giovanni" and "Così.") Peter Sellars was the director, Craig Smith the conductor. "Così" had first appeared at PepsiCo in 1986, "Giovanni" in 1987, and "Figaro" last year. Before the revivals, and, for that matter, during the run, the shows were rethought, rerehearsed, refined. The productions have been widely discussed. They have been attended by concerned audiences, including people for whom stock Mozart at the Met or the City Opera holds small attraction. The "trilogy" goes next to Vienna, to be captured for distribution on television and video; in December, the "Figaro" and the "Giovanni" will be played in Paris; the "Così" has already been seen in Stuttgart. These are all-American productions: the "Figaro" is set high in the Trump Tower, the "Giovanni" in drug-ridden Harlem, and "Così" in a diner by the sea. They have been hailed, largely with admiration, sometimes with distaste, as a personal, powerful, and consistent "statement" about the role that Mozart's operas can play in contemporary—and, specifically, American contemporary—life. So it is tempting to try to "place" them, to treat them as the latest important episode in the long performance history of Mozart opera. As a critic, I prefer to focus on and describe individual performances, not think about trends, tendencies, patterns. Performance history becomes falsely schematic without many qualifications and caveats. (Likewise with the early-music movement: its manifestations vary too widely to conform to any easily formulated pattern.) Moreover, as a director Mr. Sellars plainly set out not so much to "make a statement" as to produce three individual—though mutually illuminating—musical dramas as vividly and potently as he could.



"While we're waiting for His Honor, may I offer the jury a selection of hand-dipped Swiss chocolates, compliments of my client?"

"Don Giovanni" is the first opera with a record of well-nigh continuous performance since the time of its première (in 1787), and it has been the most influential of all operas. The young Verdi and the young Wagner learned very different lessons from it—a work so rich as to prompt varying, and incompatible, interpretations. Two of my most striking "Don Giovanni" productions—Virginio Puecher's at the 1965 Holland Festival and Walter Felsenstein's at the Berlin Comic Opera in 1966—fit into no schematic pattern of Mozart performance through the years. (The first was so fierce and violent that its conductor, Carlo Maria Giulini, decreed that either he or the director had to leave; Puecher left, some days before the first night, but he had set his mark on the show. The second was the most erotically charged "Giovanni" I have seen.) Similarly with "Figaro": a decade later, Giorgio Strehler's production—in Paris, Washington, then Milan—was a landmark. In the Purchase program note Mr. Sellars calls it a "perfect evening of opera in my life," one that long deterred him from tackling the piece anew. But Strehler's Mozart productions were exceptions, and in repeated revivals they were diluted, sometimes rendered merely decorative. I saw this happen with his Salzburg "Entführung."

"THE MAGIC FLUTE" was one of the first operas I attended; there was a piano-vocal score in the nursery; I like to think that in some ways it shaped and directed my life. A fuller discovery of Mozart began with Glyndebourne: the prewar recordings, in 78-r.p.m. albums, accompanied by bilingual translations, and the postwar Glyndebourne productions—"Die Entführung" and "Così" in 1950, "Idomeneo," "Figaro," and "Giovanni" the following year—which, like the recorded performances, were conducted by Fritz Busch and directed by Carl Ebert. Busch-Ebert takes first place in my personal performance history—but along with Mozart in English at Sadler's Wells and at Covent Garden. Ideals were different then. At Covent Garden, Elisabeth Schwarz-

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kopf and Irmgard Seefried, eager to communicate as fully as possible, learned Susanna's role in Edward Dent's English translation; the Sadler's Wells Dorabella, Anna Pollak, sang the Reverend Marmaduke Brown's witty Victorian lines with a piquancy to recall Conchita Supervia. But Busch-Ebert can perhaps stand for mid-century Mozart at its best: carefully and intelligently rehearsed, sensitive to each turn of the score and the text, yet with the emphasis on the performers, not the direction. In Vienna, Salzburg, Munich, the manner at its highest was not essentially different. There was no straining for novelty. My mid-century Mozart memories are not so much of directors, conductors (Furtwängler, conducting "Die Zauberflöte" and "Don Giovanni" in Salzburg, an exception), or designers as of singers—Sena Jurinac, Suzanne Danco, Schwarzkopf, Seefried, Léopold Simoneau, Erich Kunz—who richly and colorfully filled Mozart's roles.

Günther Rennert can exemplify a director, Fritz Wunderlich a singer, who with distinction continued the tradition. Then "the age of the director" began. Throughout Europe and America, in house after house, the Mozart presentations of Jean-Pierre Ponnelle, a stage designer who had turned to stage direction, proliferated, from the late sixties onward; the Met still has versions of his "Idomeneo," "Figaro," and "Clemenza di Tito." *De mortuis* and all that—but I, while admiring his technical ability, often deplored his work, found him eager to subjugate sense to spectacle, agreed with whoever declared that Ponnelle was a director for whom too much was never quite enough. He scrawled copiously over the scores he touched. When Mozart wrote a soliloquy, Ponnelle liked to have at least two people onstage; intimate duets were overheard by one, two, three other persons. He left a mark on Mozart production. (The Sellars trilogy will perhaps help to erase it.) His décors were dominant; I recall many a "Ponnelle Mozart" without remembering who sang in it. Like Franco Zeffirelli, he turned Mozart into grand opera.

Meanwhile, Peter Hall, during the seventies, at Glyndebourne staged clear-eyed, clear-eared presentations of "Figaro," "Don Giovanni," and "Così"—the first two now issued on video. Hall restored what might be called straight-theatre values to the dramas: the productions were realistic; the characters were human beings, not posturing opera singers. Yet he worked with the music, directed his actors in a way that made bursting into an aria seem the most natural thing in the world for them to do. When people now ask me what Mozart opera recordings to buy, I commend the old Busch albums as starting points, the Hall productions as video versions.

SUMMER is the time when Mozart operas are performed all over. Salzburg, Glyndebourne, Aix-en-Provence, Drottningholm, and the other festivals vie—along with the regular houses whose seasons continue—to secure the world's best Mozartian singers. Let me lead to an account of the Purchase trilogy by considering some other Mozart performances of the summer. At Aix, there was a new production of "Die Zauberflöte," directed by Jorge Lavelli and designed by Max Bignens. As a production, it was nothing: trad with modern trimmings, black-and-white sets, stage covered with plastic white fur onto which the characters had been directed often to sink, in the cliché manner of opera in the eighties. (Even the Queen of the Night, Hellen Kwon, fell to her knees in her second aria.) The three Ladies were three hags, riding broomsticks. Sarastro rode a horse on wheels. The good characters wore anyone-for-tennis white. But the Pamina and the Tamino were two young American artists of merit: Dawn Upshaw and Kurt Streit. Miss Upshaw had directness and honesty in her singing; Pamina's plights were voiced straightforwardly, from the heart, without artifice, and were expressed in a tone pure through all the range. Mr. Streit had a command of the text uncommon today even among German tenors; with his stresses and inflections he brought Tamino's words to life. The timbre was not ravishing—I desist from hailing a new Wunderlich, who was an Aix Tamino before he hit the headlines at Salzburg—but it was always agreeable, supple, sure and easy, unpushed. The Papageno, Anton Scharinger, was conventional but acceptable, and so were most of the others. Armin Jordan's conducting was old-style "standard" (and not always in time with the cast). The living Pamina and Tamino made this a "Zauberflöte" one could respond to with eagerness.

In London, Covent Garden revived its eight-year-old production of the opera: a sound, decorative, conventional presentation. (I'd call it a "big-house production" were Covent Garden not smaller than the houses in which most American regional opera companies play.) Staged initially by August Everding, designed by Jürgen Rose, this "Flute" takes life (or not) from its principals. The revival, staged by Helmut Lehberger, lived in its Papageno, François Le Roux. Once again, France seems to be producing singers of merit: in these columns Mr. Le Roux's Pelléas has been praised; on a recent REM disk he sings Duparc songs beautifully. His Papageno was keenly projected, the words right out on the lips. He communicated. The other performers did not. Karita Mattila, the Pamina, was dull, unimaginative, and insecure; Keith Lewis, the Tamino, was merely loud; Robert Lloyd's Sarastro offered able, well-paced routine. Colin Davis conducted; an acquired Old Master patina seemed to mask the youthful, ardent advocacy that once informed his account of the "Flute." He tended to be heavy and emphatic. The flute itself was played in a puffy, vibrant, modern manner.

AT Glyndebourne, there was a new "Figaro" directed by Peter Hall. Simon Rattle conducted the Orchestra of the Age of Enlightenment. In this respect, at least, the performance paid tribute to the early-music movement, and the instrumental textures were transparent. In other respects, it was an ordinary modern performance that happened to be accompanied by an "old" orchestra. The players—invisible, sunk in the pit, unable to see the stage—were not in lively

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give-and-take with the singers. Mr. Rattle enjoys the light, lithe sound of "old" orchestras. (So do I.) In a July *Opera* interview he says, "The more classical music one does, the less possible it becomes to go back. . . . For a lot of us now, this kind of Mozart has become quite natural, it's the air we breathe, it's not going to go away. A lot of the conventional symphony orchestras, though, are not doing it and I've had my fights in the last couple of years." What Mr. Rattle says is true: in the light of current listening, the way Mr. Jordan and Sir Colin had treated the "Flute" sounded somehow mastodonic. (Some would call Mr. Rattle's preference trendy: Richard Taruskin, in several trenchant reviews and articles, has declared the "period" performances of our day to be modish late-twentieth-century manifestations. While rightly inveighing against commercial hype, ill-founded pretensions to "authenticity," and the notion that the use—even the accomplished use—of original instruments can in itself guarantee good performances, he seems sometimes to be driving a scholarly steamroller at Aunt Sallys that few serious musicians take seriously. Perhaps they do need such thorough knocking down. In the process, Mr. Taruskin—possibly to his own dismay—gives comfort to people reluctant to hear, as he is not, the merits, as well as the musical failings, that have marked "period" endeavor.) In the Glyndebourne "Figaro," the effect of the Enlightenment orchestra was largely cosmetic. Onstage, all was conventional. The naturalness of Sir Peter's earlier production has been replaced by oodles of busy, stagy moves. The down-on-the-ground cliché was much employed: the Count knelt during his aria; four of the six characters knelt in the recognition ensemble; the Countess flopped to the ground during "Dove sono" (beside a chair that stood ready to receive her); Susanna began "Deh vieni" on her knees and ended it on her back. The Marcellina, Felicity Palmer, seemed to be the only real person present.

THE City Opera has a new "Don Giovanni," directed by Harold Prince and conducted by Sergiu Comissiona. I could not stick out more than an act: the singing of the Anna and the Elvira, Elizabeth Holleque and Frances Ginsberg, was too unpleasant to be borne. Neither of them showed any wish to produce true, pure, exactly focussed notes. The Anna mushed her consonants and discolored her vowels; a word like "vendetta" seemed to carry no meaning for her beyond the necessity of straining to push out some noise. There was no one else onstage to hold one's attention—except the Masetto, Dean Peterson. I wished he had been cast as the Giovanni or the Leporello, for he is a singer with acting ability, a lively face, lively words, lively phrasing. There was somebody there. John Cheek's Giovanni was a cipher. Jan Opalach's Leporello was quite well sung, within a lowest-common-denominator clown account of the role. The Ottavio, Jon Garrison, had good intentions but not the means to realize them. Erie Mills' Zerlina was efficient, but small and peaky in timbre. The women were got up, City Opera fashion, as harlots, with extravagantly lashed and painted eyes. Rolf Langenfass had set the piece in a tinsel grove, decked with movable columns and portals. If, let's say, Ljuba Welitsch as the Anna, Jurinac as the Elvira, Cesare Siepi as the Giovanni had been singing, they could have animated this stage and made the production acceptable. Modern singers tend to rely on "direction," and what Mr. Prince gave these singers to do was dull, obvious, and, often, so far upstage that arias carried no impact. I rather liked Mr. Comissiona's brisk approach to the score, but the singers evidently had other ideas and were sometimes reluctant to keep up with him. There was a fair amount of laughter in the house. The timing suggested that it came from spectators who were reading the English supertitles rather than attending to the performance: an American cast was addressing an American audience in a foreign language. There is a case for doing that when the language is used communicatively, but this cast was hardly doing justice to Da Ponte—or to Mozart.

AND so to Purchase, where the three operas were performed with an intensity and seriousness that made what I had seen at Aix, Covent Garden, Glyndebourne, and the City Opera seem frivolous. I did not admire everything. Mr. Smith is a conductor who gets slow when emotions quicken—not potently, as Furtwängler did, but draggily. The dramas, for all their stage impact, kept losing musical impetus. Purchase's pickup orchestra provided few special pleasures. I wish that Mr. Sellars could have had in his casts Miss Upshaw and Messrs. Streit, Le Roux, and Peterson, so that the vocal level could have been higher, and so that those young Mozart singers of uncommon vocal prowess and imagination could have worked with an inspired director and have shone in a whole performance, instead of being the only lights in otherwise largely routine shows. The best sung of the Purchase trilogy was "Don Giovanni." Dominique Labelle was a gleaming Donna Anna. Lorraine Hunt, the Donna Elvira, turned to expressive use the current—and, one hopes, passing—awkward passages in her once sure and still lustrous soprano. As Giovanni and Leporello, the Perry twins, Eugene and Herbert, were agile and exact—Leporello's voice nicely the darker. Ai Lan Zhu, the Zerlina, was pure and true but a shade monochrome in timbre and expression. The Ottavio, Caroll Freeman, was the main disappointment: a tenor once sweet and ductile had become pushed, loud, and coarse. One would have liked the Susanna (Jeanne Ommerlé) to have a sweeter and fuller timbre; the Countess (Jayne West) to be able to lift more amply into radiance; the Fiordiligi and the Cherubino (both Susan Larsen) to be as colorful vocally as they were visually. But all in all one was grateful for singing that was poised, unforced, lively, precisely focussed, intelligent—never mere, meaningless "vocalism." James Maddalena was an incisive Count and Guglielmo. Sanford Sylvan, the Figaro and the Don Alfonso, has a smooth, beautiful baritone, though he seems to be on the verge of turning "dangerous gentleness" into an affectation.

Performance history, like most history, falls into rondo form, with developments and variants of the main theme at each recurrence. In 1915, in Strasbourg, Otto Klemperer both conducted and directed a "Figaro" that aroused fierce opposition. Peter Heyworth writes about it in his Klemperer biography. It included two extra pages of recitative—Beaumarchais composed by Mahler—in the trial scene; the Susanna was an Aida, the Cherubino an Elsa. And Klemperer's casting was

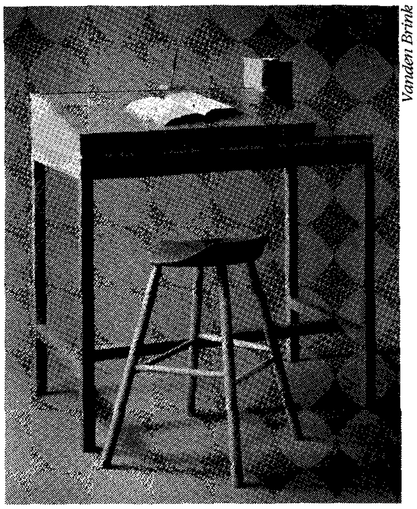
> part and parcel of his approach to the work. For him, Mozart was a matter of "Helligheit auf dunklem Grunde" ("Lightness on a dark background"). What he sought was a maximum of dramatic intensity compatible with the music's classical equilibrium. Strength had to be matched to grace. This dark realism was far removed from the sweetness and light that had been regarded as the prime characteristics of *le divin Mozart* in the previous century. Thus Klemperer's "Figaro" came as a shock.

One generally sympathetic critic, while welcoming the "thoughtful and enlivening approach," regretted a certain "lack of simplicity and naturalness."

Mr. Sellars, too, has sought "a maximum of dramatic intensity" in Mozart. There have been plenty of dark, demonic presentations of "Don Giovanni"—but none, perhaps, so consistently, Dantesquely infernal as his, none in which not just the protagonist but all the characters end up among the damned. In his "Figaro" there are few moments of relaxation; in his "Così" almost none, once the wager has been embarked on. Yes, I do find something missing: that "equilibrium" rightly discerned as peculiarly Mozartian. The tension in these performances is kept consistently high. They are not in balance. I would not want the Purchase Mozarts to be my, or anyone's, only Mozart. But they are not. I cannot understand any lack of eager response to passionate, stern, excited presentations offered not as "the whole truth" about Mozart but as an important part of that truth made more vividly manifest than ever before.

In all sorts of complementary ways, the execution is wonderful. Adrianne Lobel's sets for "Figaro" and "Così," George Tsypin's for "Don Giovanni," Dunya Ramicova's costumes for all three, and James Ingalls' lighting conspire with Mr. Sellars' direction to produce one unforgettable image after another. The manner of staging is not realistic but a quicksilver compound of realistically observed behavior, antics (jokes are not absent), acrobatics, Kabuki, modern dance, sudden stillness. The works are sung in Italian, which adds another strand of intricacy to the play of meanings. And the Italian is used. Performance on this level is rare.

—Andrew Porter



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THE CURRENT CINEMA

A Wounded Apparition

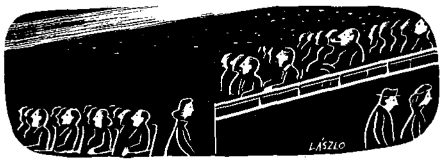
SOME movies—"Grand Illusion" and "Shoeshine" come to mind, and the two "Godfather"s and "The Chant of Jimmie Blacksmith" and "The Night of the Shooting Stars"—can affect us in more direct, emotional ways than simple entertainment movies. They have more imagination, more poetry, more intensity than the usual fare; they have large themes, and a vision. They can leave us feeling simultaneously elated and wiped out. Overwhelmed, we may experience a helpless anger if we hear people mock them or poke holes in them in order to dismiss them. The new "Casualties of War" has this kind of purity. If you meet people who are bored by movies you love such as "The Earrings of Madame De . . ." or "The Unbearable Lightness of Being," chances are you can brush it off and think it's their loss. But this new film is the kind that makes you feel protective. When you leave the theatre, you'll probably find that you're not ready to talk about it. You may also find it hard to talk lightly about anything.

"Casualties of War" is based on a Vietnam incident of 1966 that was reported in this magazine by the late Daniel Lang, in the issue of October 18, 1969. (The article was reprinted as a book.) Lang gave a calm, emotionally devastating account of a squad of five American soldiers who were sent on a five-day reconnaissance mission; they kidnapped a Vietnamese village girl, raped her, and then covered up their crime by killing her. The account dealt with the kind of gangbang rape that the Vietnam War had in common with virtually all wars, except that the rapists here, unable in general to distinguish Vietcong sympathizers from other Vietnamese, didn't care that the girl wasn't Vietcong. This indifference to whether a candidate for rape is friend or foe may not really be that much of an exception; it may be frequent in wartime. What's unusual here may simply be that a witness forced the case into the open and it resulted in four court-martial convictions.

A number of movie people hoped to make a film of the Lang article, and, though it was commercially risky, Warners bought the rights and announced that Jack Clayton would make the picture—an arrangement that fell apart. Plans involving John Schlesinger and other directors also collapsed, but the article may have been the (unofficial) taking-off point for one film that did get made: Elia Kazan's low-budget, 16-mm. "The Visitors," of 1972, which Kazan himself financed. He used a prosecution for rape and murder as background material to explain why a couple of ex-servicemen released from Leavenworth on a technicality were out to get the former buddy who had testified against them. Eventually, in 1987, after Brian De Palma had a success with "The Untouchables," he was able to persuade Paramount to pick up the rights to the Lang story, which he'd had in the back of his mind since 1969. A script was commissioned from the playwright David Rabe, the quondam Catholic and Vietnam vet who had written "Streamers" and other plays about the war (and had wanted to work on this material for some years), but, when De Palma was all set to film it in Thailand, Paramount pulled out. The picture finally got under way at Columbia—the first picture to be approved by the company's new president, Dawn Steel. Whatever else she does, she should be honored for that decision, because twenty years later this is still risky material.

LANG's factual narrative is based on conversations with Eriksson, the witness who testified against the other men, and on the court-martial records. (The names were changed to protect everyone's privacy.) Rabe's script follows it closely, except that Rabe dramatizes the story by creating several incidents to explain what led to the rape and what followed.

When Eriksson (Michael J. Fox), who has just arrived in Vietnam, is out in a jungle skirmish at night, a mortar explosion shifts the earth under him; he drops down, caught, his feet dangling in an enemy tunnel. De Palma photographs the scene as if it were an ant farm—he shows us aboveground and underground in the same shot. Eriksson yells for help, and in the instant that a Vietcong, who has been crawling toward the dangling legs, slashes at them with his knife, Sergeant Meserve (Sean Penn) pulls Eriksson out. A minute later, Meserve saves him again from that Vietcong, who has come out of the hole to get him.

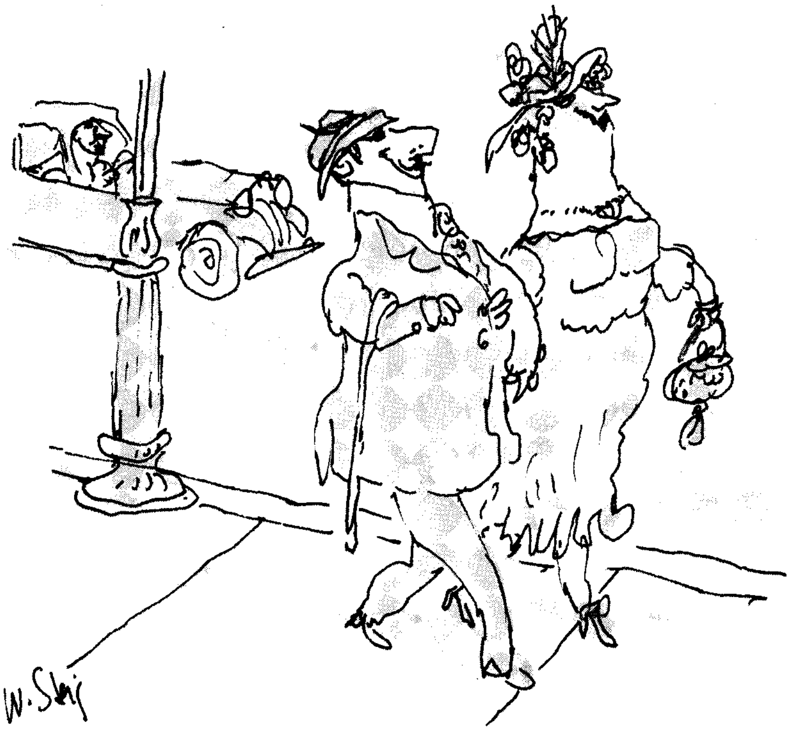


In the morning, the soldiers enter a peaceful-looking village; they stand near the mud-and-bamboo huts and see a stream and bridges and, a little way in the distance, paddy fields where women and elderly men are working, under the shadow of harsh, steep mountains. The tiered compositions are pale, like Chinese ink paintings. Throughout the movie, everything that's beyond the understanding of the Americans seems to be visualized in layered images; this subtle landscape reaching to Heaven is the site of the random violence that leads to the rape.

Smiling and eager, Eriksson walks behind two water buffalo, helping an ancient farmer with his plowing. Brownie (Erik King), a large-spirited, joshing black soldier, who is Meserve's pal—they're both due to go home in less than a month—cautions Eriksson about his exposed position on the field and walks him back to where the Sarge is taking time out, with the other men. They're all relaxed in a clearing near this friendly village, but we become ominously aware that the villagers in the paddies are evaporating. Brownie is standing with an arm around Meserve when the pastoral scene is ruptured: bullets tear into Brownie from a V.C. across the stream. An instant later, a guerrilla who's dressed as a farmer runs toward the group and flings a grenade at them. Meserve spots him and warns Eriksson, who turns and fires his grenade launcher; by luck, he explodes the V.C.'s grenade. Then the screen is divided by a couple of split-focus effects: in one, Eriksson, in closeup, rejoices at his freak shot and is so excited that he lets the grenade-thrower slip away; in another, Eriksson is staring the wrong way while behind him a couple of women open a tunnel for a V.C., who disappears into it. Meanwhile, Meserve fires his M-16 rifle, and then, his face showing his agony, he uses his hand like a poultice on Brownie's wound. A soldier radios for medical help, and Meserve, never letting go of his friend, keeps reassuring him until he's loaded on a chopper.

IN these early scenes, Meserve is skillful and resourceful. He's only twenty years old, and as Sean Penn plays him he has the reckless bravery of youth. He's genuinely heroic. But Brownie dies (as Meserve knew he would), and back at the base camp the men, who have readied themselves for a visit to a brothel, are stopped and told that the village adjoining the base has been declared off limits. It's too much for Meserve, who has been put in charge of the five-day mission to check out a mountain area for signs of Vietcong activity, and later that night he finishes briefing his men by telling them to be ready to leave an hour early, so they can detour to a village to "requisition" a girl. Eriksson half thinks the Sarge is kidding. It takes a while for him (and for us) to understand that Meserve is not the man he was; only a day has passed since his friend was killed, but he has become bitter and vindictive—a conscious trickster and sinner.

Has something in Meserve snapped? Paul Fussell writes in his new book "Wartime" that in the Second World War the American military "learned that men will inevitably go mad in battle and that no appeal to patriotism, manliness, or loyalty to the group will ultimately matter." So "in later wars things were arranged differently," he explains. "In Vietnam, it was understood that a man fulfilled his combat obligation and purchased his reprieve if he served a fixed term, 365 days, and not days in combat either but days in the theatre of war. The infantry was now treated somewhat like the Air Corps in the Second War: performance of a stated number of missions guaranteed escape." Meserve, who has led dozens of combat patrols, has reached his limit with only a few weeks to go; he turns into an outlaw with a smooth justification for anything. (The kidnapping is a matter of cool planning: the girl can be explained as a "V.C. whore" taken for interrogation.) When Meserve's five-man patrol, having set out before dawn, arrives at the village he selected in advance, he and Corporal Clark (Don Harvey) peer into one hut after another, shining a flashlight on the sleeping women until they find one to their taste—Oanh (Thuy Thu Le), a girl of eighteen or twenty.



"Truckin' on down the avenue without a single thing to do."

• •

The terrified girl clings to her family. Clark carries her out, and her mother and sister come rushing after him, pleading in words that are just jabber to the soldiers, who want to get moving before it's light. They've taken only a few steps when the mother desperately hands them the girl's scarf. It's a pitiful, ambiguous gesture. She seems to want Oanh to have the comfort of this scarf—perhaps it's new, perhaps it's the only token of love the mother can offer her daughter. Eriksson says "Oh Jesus God" when he sees the men's actions, even before the mother holds out the scarf. Then he mutters helplessly, "I'm sorry." He's sick with grief, and we in the audience may experience a surge of horror; we know we're watching something irrevocable. Clark, a crude, tall kid who suggests a young Lee Marvin, is irritated by the girl's crying and whimpering, and he stuffs the scarf into her mouth, to gag her.

THE men climb high above the valleys and set up a temporary command post in an abandoned hut in the mountains; it's there that the sobbing, sniffling girl is brutalized. (Thereafter, she's referred to as "the whore" or "the bitch.") Eriksson refuses his turn to rape her, but he can't keep the others from tying her up, beating her, and violating her. He himself is assaulted when he tries to stop them from killing her. Eriksson is brave, but he's also inexperienced and unsure of himself. In the few minutes in which he's alone with the girl and could help her escape, he delays because he's afraid of being charged as a deserter. The opportunity passes, and we can see the misery in his eyes. Meserve sees it, too—sees that Eriksson finds him disgusting, indecent. And he begins to play up to Eriksson's view of him: he deliberately turns himself into a jeering, macho clown, taunting Eriksson, questioning his masculinity, threatening him. Meserve starts to act out his madness; that's the rationale for Penn's theatrical, heated-up performance. He brings off the early, quiet scenes, too. When Meserve shaves after learning of Brownie's death, we see that the hopefulness has drained out of him. Suddenly he's older; the radiance is gone. Soon he's all calculation. Although he was coarse before, it was good-humored coarseness; now there's cynical, low cunning in it. Fox, in contrast, uses a minimum of showmanship. He gives such an interior performance that it may be undervalued. To play a young American in Vietnam who's instinctively thoughtful and idealistic—who's uncorrupted—is excruciatingly difficult, yet Fox never lets the character come across as a prig. The two men act in totally different styles, and the styles match up.

And, whatever the soldiers say or do, there's the spectre of the dazed, battered girl ranting in an accusatory singsong. The movie is haunted by Oanh long before she's dead. The rapists think they've killed her, but she rises; in our minds, she rises again and again. On the basis of the actual soldiers' descriptions of the girl's refusal to accept death, Daniel Lang called her "a wounded apparition," and De Palma and his cinematographer, Stephen H. Burum, give us images that live up to those words—perhaps even go beyond them. Trying to escape along a railway trestle high up against the wall of a canyon, Oanh might be a Kabuki ghost. She goes past suffering into the realm of myth, which in this movie has its own music—a recurring melody played on the panflute.

That lonely music keeps reminding us of the despoiled girl, of the incomprehensible language, the tunnels, the hidden meanings, the sorrow. Eriksson can't forgive himself for his failure to save Oanh. The picture shows us how daringly far he would have had to go to prevent what happened; he would have had to be lucky as well as brave. This is basically the theme that De Palma worked with in his finest movie up until now, the political fantasy "Blow Out," in which the protagonist, played by John Travolta, also failed to save a young woman's life. We in the audience are put in the man's position: we're made to feel the awfulness of being ineffectual. This lifelike defeat is central to the movie. (One hot day on my first trip to New York City, I walked past a group of men on a tenement stoop. One of them, in a sweaty sleeveless T-shirt, stood shouting at a screaming, weeping little boy perhaps eighteen months old. The man must have caught a glimpse of my stricken face, because he called out, "You don't like it, lady? Then how do you like this?" And he picked up a bottle of pink soda pop from the sidewalk and poured it on the baby's head. Wailing sounds, much louder than before, followed me down the street.)

Eriksson feels he must at least reveal what happened to Oanh and where her body lies. He's a dogged innocent trying to find out what to do; he goes to the higher-ups in the Army and gets a load of doubletalk and some straight talk, too. The gist of it is that in normal (i.e., peacetime) circumstances Meserve would not have buckled like this, and they want Eriksson to keep quiet about it. But he can't deal with their reasoning; he has to stick with the rules he grew up with. He moves through one layer of realization to the next; there's always another, hidden level. The longer Eriksson is in Vietnam, the more the ground opens up beneath him. He can't even go to the latrine without seeing below the floor slats a grenade that Clark has just put there, to kill him.

De Palma has mapped out every shot, yet the picture is alive and mysterious. When Meserve rapes Oanh, the horizon seems to twist into a crooked position; everything is bent away from us. Afterward, he goes outside in the rain and confronts Eriksson, who's standing guard. Meserve's relationship to the universe has changed; the images of nature have a different texture, and when he lifts his face to the sky you may think he's swapped souls with a werewolf. Eriksson is numb and demoralized, and the rain courses down his cheeks in slow motion. De Palma has such seductive, virtuosic control of film craft that he can express convulsions in the unconscious.

In the first use of the split-focus effect, Eriksson was so happy about having hit the grenade that he lost track of the enemy. In a later use of the split effect, Eriksson tries to save Oanh from execution by creating a gigantic diversion: he shoots his gun and draws enemy fire. What he doesn't know is that Clark, who is behind him, is stabbing her. He didn't know what was going on behind him after he was rescued from the tunnel, either. This is Vietnam, where you get fooled. It's also De Palmaland. There are more dimensions than you can keep track of, as the ant-farm shot tells you. And the protagonist who maps things out to protect the girl from other men (as Travolta did) will always be surprised. The theme has such personal meaning for the director that his technique—his own mapping out of the scenes—is itself a dramatization of the theme. His art is in controlling everything, but he still can't account for everything. He plans everything and discovers something more.

De Palma keeps you aware of the whole movie as a composition. Like Godard, he bounces you in and out of the assumptions about movies that you have brought with you to the theatre. He stretches time and distance, using techniques that he developed in horror-fantasy and suspense pictures, but without the pop overtones. He shifts from realism to hallucinatory Expressionism. When the wounded Brownie is flown out by helicopter, the movement of the yellow-green river running beneath him suggests being so close up against a painting that it's pure pigment. When Eriksson is flown out, it's at an angle you've never seen before: he looks up at the rotor blades as they darken the sky. These helicopters are on drugs.

GREAT movies are rarely perfect movies. David Rabe wrestles with the ugly side of male bonding; he's on to American men's bluster and showoff, and his scenes certainly have drive. But his dialogue is sometimes explicit in the grungy-poetic mode of "important" American theatre. The actual Eriksson was in fact (as he is in the movie) married and a Lutheran. He was also, as Daniel Lang reported, articulate. This is Eriksson talking to Lang:

> We all figured we might be dead in the next minute, so what difference did it make what we did? But the longer I was over there, the more I became convinced that it was the other way around that counted—that *because* we might not be around much longer, we had to take extra care how we behaved.

Rabe uses these remarks but places them maladroitly (as a response to something that has just happened), and he makes them sound like the stumbling thoughts of a folksy, subliterate fellow reaching for truth:

> I mean, just because each one of us might at any second be blown away, everybody's actin' like we can do anything, man, and it don't matter what we do—but I'm thinkin' maybe it's the other way around, maybe the main thing is just the opposite. Because we might be dead in the next split second, maybe we gotta be extra careful what we do—because maybe it matters more—Jesus, maybe it matters more than we even know.

This passage is the heaviest hammering in the movie (and the poorest piece of staging), but it's also a clear indication of Rabe's method. De Palma works directly on our emotions. Rabe's dialogue sometimes sounds like the work of a professional anti-war dramatist trying to make us think. Still, there's none of the ego satisfaction of moral indignation that is put into most Vietnam films, and what De Palma does with the camera is so powerful that the few times you wince at the dialogue are almost breathers.

THIS movie about war and rape—De Palma's nineteenth film—is the culmination of his best work. In essence, it's feminist. I think that in his earlier movies De Palma was always involved in examining (and sometimes satirizing) victimization, but he was often accused of being a victimizer. Some moviegoers (women, especially) were offended by his thrillers; they thought there was something reprehensibly sadistic in his cleverness. He *was* clever. When people talk about their sex fantasies, their descriptions almost always sound like movies, and De Palma headed right for that linkage: he teased the audience about how susceptible it was to romantic manipulation. "Carrie" and "Dressed to Kill" are like lulling erotic reveries that keep getting broken into by scary jokes. He let you know that he was jerking you around and that it was for your amused, childish delight, but a lot of highly vocal people expressed shock. This time, De Palma touches on raw places in people's reactions to his earlier movies; he gets at the reality that may have made some moviegoers too fearful to enjoy themselves. He goes to the heart of sexual victimization, and he does it with a new authority. The way he makes movies now, it's as if he were saying, "What is getting older if it isn't learning more ways that you're vulnerable?"

CRUELTY is not taken lightly in this movie. In the audience, we feel alone with the sounds that come out of Oanh's throat; we're alone with the sight of the blood clotting her nose. The director has isolated us from all distractions. There are no plot subterfuges; war is the only metaphor. The soldiers hate Vietnam and the Vietnamese for their frustrations, their grievances, their fear, and they take their revenge on the girl. When Brownie is shot, Eriksson, like Meserve and the others, feels that they've come to fight for the defense of the villagers who knew about the hidden guerrillas and could have warned them. They feel betrayed. Could the villagers have warned them without being killed themselves? It's doubtful, but the soldiers are sure of it, and for most of them that's justification enough for what they do to Oanh. The movie doesn't give us the aftermath: Oanh's mother searched for her and got South Vietnamese troops to help in the search; the mother was then taken away by the Vietcong, accused of having led the troops to a V.C. munitions cache. De Palma simply concentrates on what happened and why.

Meserve and Clark and one of the other men feel like conquerors when they take Oanh with them. They act out their own war fantasy; they feel it's a soldier's right to seize women for his pleasure. Comradeship is about the only spiritual value these jungle fighters still recognize; they're fighting for each other, and they feel that a gangbang relieves their tensions and brings them closer together. When Clark slings Oanh over his shoulder and carries her out of her family's hut, he's the hero of his own comic strip. These men don't suffer from guilt—not in the way that Eriksson suffers for the few minutes of indecisiveness in which he might have saved Oanh's life. He's turned from a cheerful, forthright kid into a desolate loner.

At the end, the swelling sound of musical absolution seems to be saying that Eriksson must put his experiences in Vietnam behind him—that he has to accept that he did all he could, and go on without always blaming himself. De Palma may underestimate the passion of his images: we don't believe that Eriksson can put Oanh's death into any kind of sane perspective, because we've just felt the sting of what he lived through. He may tell himself that he did all he could, but he feels he should have been able to protect her. The doubt is there in his eyes. (I hear that baby's cries after almost fifty years.) What makes the movie so eerily affecting? Possibly it's Oanh's last moments of life—the needle-sharp presentation of her frailty and strength, and how they intertwine. When she falls to her death, the image is otherworldly, lacerating. It's the supreme violation.

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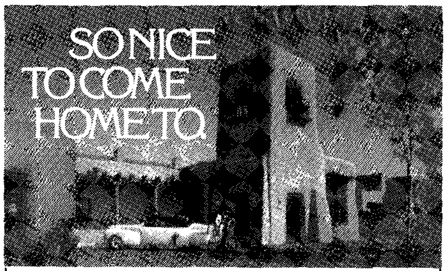
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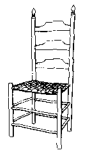
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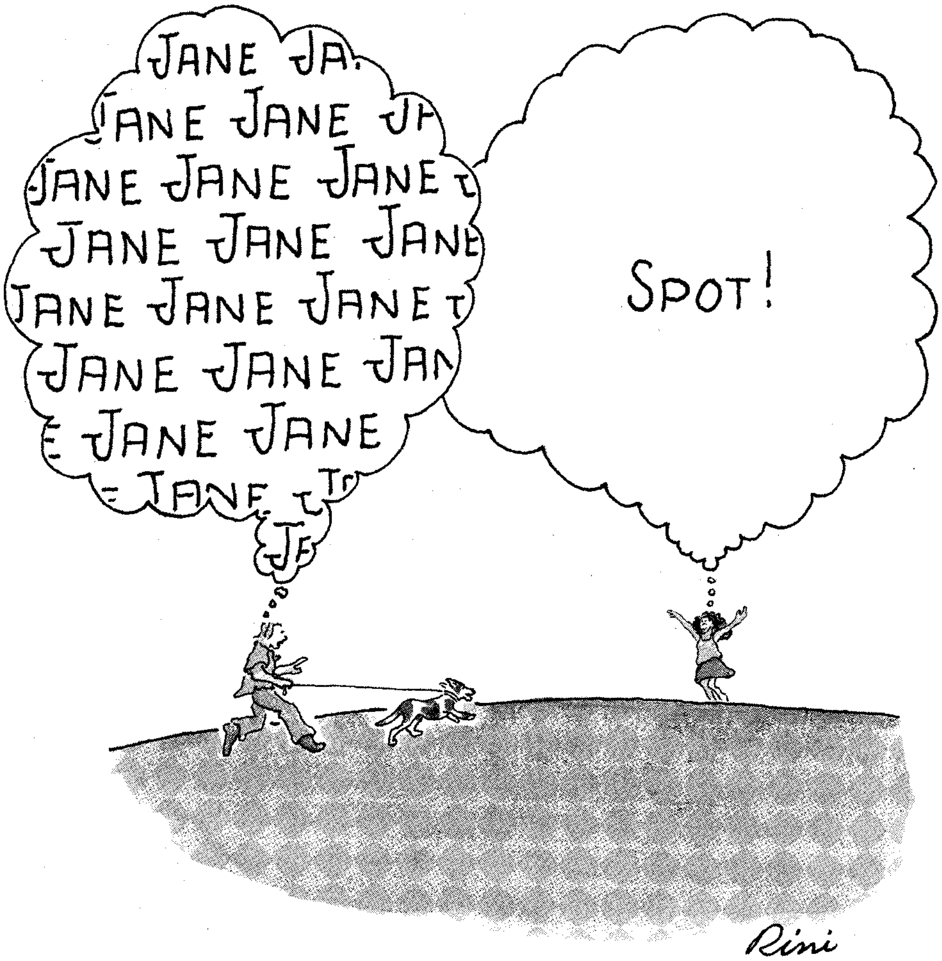
AROUND CITY HALL

Upstairs, Downstairs

IN politics, as in sports and standup comedy, timing is everything. Just before noon on August 4th, Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau announced the indictment on eleven counts of perjury of Joseph DeVincenzo. Although only a handful of New Yorkers had ever heard of him until recently, Joe D., as he was known, had been one of the most powerful figures in city government until, without any interference from Mayor Edward Koch's office, he was suddenly allowed to retire last February, at the age of forty-five, on an annual pension of fifty-two thousand dollars, which DeVincenzo, adept at the intricacies of bureaucratic regulations, had made sure would continue to be paid to him whether or not he was subsequently convicted of any crime. His annual salary had been a hundred and four thousand five hundred dollars, and although his formal title—special assistant to the mayor—sounded unimposing, he had in fact served as the city's unofficial director of personnel and of quite a few other aspects of local government. No one could be hired or promoted, have his staff increased, or, for that matter, get his office repainted or fitted out with a rug or new curtains unless Joe D. signed off on it in his quarters—Room 1, in the basement of City Hall, just below the Mayor's office. He was a familiar sight to reporters as, sometimes several times a day, he moved quietly up a rear staircase to the office of First Deputy Mayor Stanley Brezenoff, which adjoins the Mayor's outer office.

One of Joe D.'s relatively minor responsibilities was presiding over the Mayor's Talent Bank, formally a socially worthy enterprise that was set up in 1983 primarily for the purpose of bringing more blacks, Hispanics, and women into city government. Last year, the State Commission on Government Integrity, which was established by Governor Mario Cuomo in response to the Koch administration's corruption scandals, started looking into the operations of the Talent Bank. After months of sworn testimony by present and former city employees, the commission concluded that the Talent Bank had been far less concerned with affirmative action than with serving as an old-fashioned patronage mill. Many of the jobs, and especially those that paid well, had been parcelled out to candidates—mostly white males—whose applications signified that they had been recommended by well-placed political figures, including several of the Democratic county bosses whose names have become infamous (locally, at least) as the result of the trials held in connection with the municipal scandals. One former city employee testified that he had been turned down for a job until he appealed to the Mayor's good friend Stanley Friedman, the Bronx Democratic boss, who had a sign in his office that said "CRIME DOESN'T PAY—AS WELL AS POLITICS," and who is now serving a twelve-year sentence in federal prison for helping to turn a city agency, the Parking Violations Bureau, into a racketeering enterprise. (Friedman's name comes up frequently these days in local public discourse, introduced by one or another of the three Democrats and two Republicans who are running against Koch in this year's mayoral election. Of these opponents—the Democrats are Comptroller Harrison Goldin, Manhattan Borough President David Dinkins, and Richard Ravitch, a wealthy builder and real-estate developer, and the Republicans are former United States Attorney Rudolph Giuliani and Ronald Lauder, the son of Estée Lauder, of the cosmetics company—Giuliani, understandably, mentions the name most often, since he personally tried the case against Friedman and also won indictments and convictions of several other City Hall regulars.) That witness told the integrity commission—it is usually referred to as the Feerick Commission, in honor of its chairman, John Feerick, who is the dean of Fordham Law School—that First Deputy Mayor Brezenoff then sent word that he was to be hired, because he had Friedman's backing.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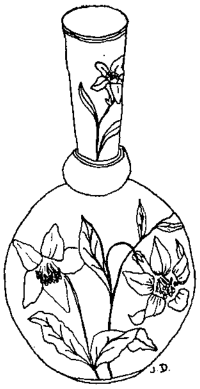
A number of present and former city employees also told the commission about a wild scene in the midwinter of 1986, a few weeks after the attempted suicide of the Queens Democratic boss Donald Manes broke the local corruption story wide open. Apparently under the impression that agents of one level of government or another, armed with subpoenas, were about to move in on the Talent Bank, the employees there—on the orders, it was testified, of Joe D.—spent a day and part of an evening behind locked doors ripping up, shredding, and then carting away all notations of political referrals that were attached to applications and deleting such evidence from the office computer. The Talent Bank office was in a building a few hundred feet north of City Hall. Appropriately, some people thought later, the building is the old Tweed Courthouse, whose corrupt construction costs in the late eighteen-sixties brought down Boss Tweed. Apparently, it wasn't the only area of city government where the Manes suicide attempt set off panic. One witness testified that a Talent Bank employee coming over from City Hall to help had said, "If you think this scene is frantic, you should see things at City Hall. It's chaos."

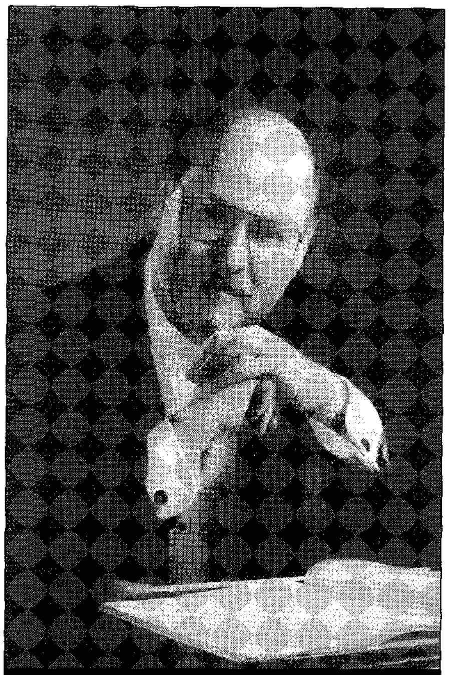
It was during appearances before the Feerick Commission that DeVincenzo made the statements that led to the eleven perjury counts. The thirty-seven-page indictment charged him with having repeatedly testified falsely that he had never known that notations of political sponsorship were attached to applications or that such information was so much a part of the process that the applications were specially grouped, according to sponsorship, when they were entered into the computer. He also denied that he had ever given orders to have such evidence destroyed or had had any idea that this was done. Afterward, one member of the commission described his performance as "a sophisticated stonewall," and another, former Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, said that some of his statements had been "not credible."

At a City Hall press conference about an hour after the indictment was announced, the Mayor, who had testified under oath that he had had no knowledge of the Talent Bank's alleged egregious aberrations, said that neither he nor any of his deputy mayors had been aware that Joe D. was going to lie (if that was what he had done)—any more than any of them had had the slightest inkling last winter that Joe D. was successfully maneuvering to retire with a fail-safe pension. After the arraignment, it was reported that prosecutors had thought of giving DeVincenzo immunity if he would testify concerning the awarding of major city contracts, about which he was believed to have considerable knowledge—but, of course (whether or not his employers had planned it that way), the fact that he had an untouchable pension had reduced their leverage. At the press conference, the Mayor said that if Joe D. was convicted he would demand, as he had in the case of Stanley Friedman, that the judge impose the maximum sentence, but he may not have realized that the max in this case was seven years on each of the eleven counts. Koch also reminded reporters that patronage is not a crime—although the Mayor has sometimes sounded as if it were, when he bragged of running a patronage-free administration and compared it with what he described as the clubhouse-infested regimes of his mayoral predecessors. In answer to a reporter's question, he said he did not know why, if patronage was perfectly legal, Joe D. had felt it necessary to lie under oath about it or why, if there had been no question of criminality at the Talent Bank, city employees had been ordered to destroy its files. In an editorial published the next morning the *News* suggested an explanation. The indictment of DeVincenzo, whom it described as "the $52,000-a-year pensioner from Mayor Koch's patronage mill," had proved that "Koch's innermost circle has been so tainted by abuse of the public trust that one of his topmost aides was driven to risk 77 years in prison to keep the abuses secret." If the truth had been told about the patronage mill working in the basement of City Hall, "literally and figuratively right under Koch's nose," the Mayor's "claim that patronage had no place in his administration would have been exposed as a sham."



At his August 4th press conference, the Mayor referred to the actions described in the Talent Bank investigation as "piddling," and, in a sense, they were: only a few thousand jobs were involved. His campaign manager, Paul Crotty, predicted that the revival of what he called "an old story" would rapidly fade from public attention. However, the indictment of a member of Koch's administration—and one who worked right at City Hall—was a highly unwelcome development for Koch as a candidate for reëlection five and a half weeks before the September 12th Democratic primary, in which, according to polls, the Mayor was well behind Dinkins. Koch, in spite of his most vigorous efforts, has been unable to persuade many listeners of his version of the municipal-corruption story, which is that it is essentially irrelevant to his administration and that it involved only a handful of people whom he barely knew and whose despicable actions he was wholly unaware of: "How the hell could I know?" (It is a present-day phenomenon that Americans keep being led by strong men here and in Washington who never saw or heard of critical events that took place in their presence or a few feet away from them.) "In all my years in office, I have never tolerated corruption of any kind," Koch said late this spring, in a fund-raising letter.

When interviewers ask the Mayor about the corruption issue, he responds either with an air of utter boredom (*that* old story) or with explosive indignation. Sometimes listeners, possibly a bit weary of the message, get it wrong. A few weeks ago, David Letterman mentioned the indictments of the mayor of Atlantic City and some of his associates. Pretending to be Koch at his most outraged, Letterman said, "Now those are just *arrests*. . . . Man for man, my administration is *still* the most corrupt in the United States"—not a superlative that a candidate for reëlection would choose to have spread around. When Koch's opponents mention the corruption story, they are happy to place it in a historical context. Dinkins has called it "the worst corruption since Jimmy Walker." Goldin, who is way down in the Democratic primary, according to polls, goes further. In the first debate among the Democratic rivals, on July 26th, Goldin intoned the names of some of the municipal-government figures who aren't around the Koch City Hall anymore. "Tur-off, Lin-den-auer, Shafran, McLaughlin, Kieves, Bot-nick . . . they haul them off in manacles," he said, looking at the Mayor. "They



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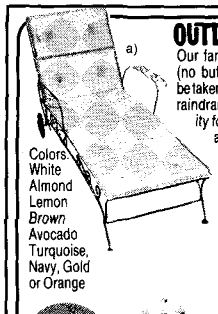

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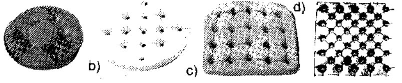

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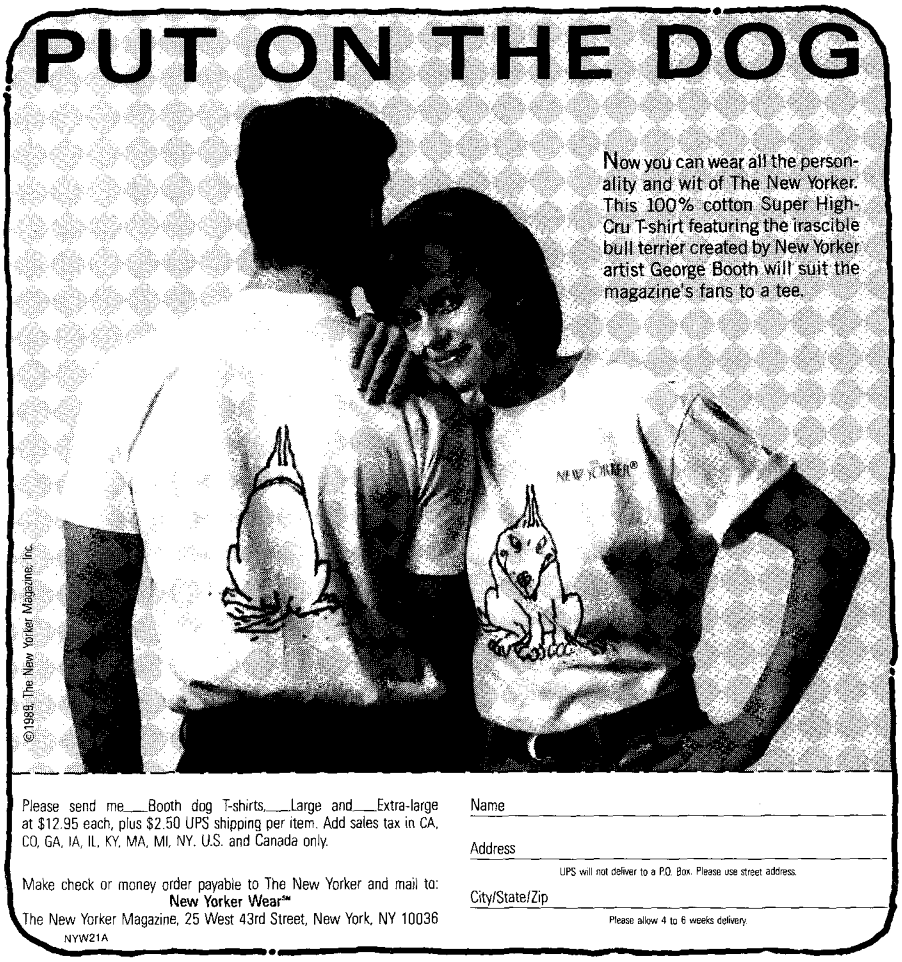
throw them in jail. You had to dismiss them in disgrace. . . . And that's a record that you can't laugh away. . . . It's a record of the worst corruption in a municipal administration in this city in history. And it's your fault." Somewhat ominously for Koch, this judgment brought applause from the audience—one of the very few bursts of applause during the debate.

THE Mayor is no slouch at placing in a historical context his version of the records of the men running for mayor against him. In the July 26th debate, he described Goldin as "the most investigated comptroller in history." A couple of weeks earlier, after Goldin criticized him for continuing to hold stock in companies that do business with South Africa while denouncing others for doing the same thing, the Mayor said of the man who has been the city's comptroller for the last sixteen years, "I have yet to meet a single person in public life—I'm sure there are some—who has any respect for Goldin's integrity." Koch is given to saying of Dinkins, "He has to defend his personal integrity. I do not." He is referring—as he then explains at length—to the fact that in late 1973, in response to routine questioning by the Commissioner of Investigation, Dinkins, who was about to be named the city's first black deputy mayor by the incoming mayor, Abraham Beame, conceded that although he had had some taxes withheld at the law firm he then worked for, he had not filed income-tax returns for the years 1969 through 1972. The news made large local headlines. The history-making appointment was cancelled. Dinkins borrowed the money and paid the taxes, along with substantial interest and penalties. In the fifteen and a half years since, there have been no further developments in the case. In 1985, the *Times*, in an enthusiastic endorsement of Dinkins for his current office, Manhattan Borough President, referred to the tax issue as a past embarrassment, indicating that it was not of great present significance. On June 30th of this year, however, a *Times* story, starting on the front page, went over the tax case in many columns of detail. If a single taxpayer is persuaded that it will cost him a pile of money and grief if he doesn't file returns, the *Times* should be credited with having performed a public service, and that may have been its intention. Some Dinkins supporters, however, could not be dissuaded from a suspicion that the prominent and lengthy story damaging to Dinkins was the *Times'* response to its June 22nd poll—its first of the campaign—which showed (as other polls had been showing for months) that Koch was thirteen points behind Dinkins in the Democratic primary and that Dinkins was virtually even with Giuliani in the general election.

PRESUMABLY, the front-page article on Dinkins' fifteen-and-a-half-year-old problem reflected not concern that Dinkins might beat Koch, whom the *Times* had strongly endorsed in his previous reëlection campaigns, or, of course, fear that the city might actually elect a black mayor but concern that the new mayor might be someone who hadn't filed tax returns. In many people's minds, however, whatever else this year's mayoral election will seem to be about, it will also be about race. The prospect of a black mayor is a matter of great pride and excitement among blacks. If Koch should defeat Dinkins in the primary or if there should be a runoff (one is required if no candidate gets forty per cent of the vote), it will be a bitter time here, since most blacks and also many white New Yorkers blame Koch's harsh rhetoric and what many see as his frequent insensitivity to the needs and interests of blacks for the deep divisions between the races in the city. One member of the *Times* staff offered an especially interesting perspective on the weight that Dinkins' tax problems should be given. A. M. Rosenthal, the former *Times* executive editor, who now has a regular column in the paper, on July 28th complained that "polls and pols" were beating up on Koch, who as mayor, he said, had been "the most effective in the history of the city." Koch had made one mistake, said Rosenthal. "He hurt the feelings and sense of pride of blacks." It was "not a race issue," since on the whole the Mayor handles race issues "with care and attention." Rosenthal then compared Koch's "mistake" in his relations with blacks with that of Dinkins in not filing tax returns. "Compared with the vituperation and ugly venom spewing from some of his attackers," Rosenthal said, "the Mayor has the mouth of Mother Teresa."

Wilbert Tatum, the editor of Harlem's *Amsterdam News*, who was travelling in Europe, was startled to discover Rosenthal's article on the opinion page of the *International Herald Tribune*, accompanied by a two-column-wide picture of the Mayor and the headline "MAYOR KOCH HAS A FIGHTING CHANCE." In an editorial in his own paper in which he dwelt on Rosenthal's view of the history of the Mayor's relations with blacks, Tatum wrote that "in Mr. Rosenthal's mind" there was never "an Eleanor Bumpurs or a Michael Stewart"—a reference to two of the long list of black New Yorkers who, though they have committed very minor crimes or no crimes at all, have in recent years somehow ended up dead while they were in the custody of white members of the New York City Police Department. Many of their names are immortalized in, among other places, the dedication of Spike Lee's "Do the Right Thing," which is set in the Bedford-Stuyvesant section of Brooklyn. In Rosenthal's mind, Tatum also wrote, "there was never a so-called 'Talent Bank' that robbed blacks of equal opportunity"—and, indeed, members of the Feerick Commission had noted that the city's only black Democratic county boss, Manhattan's Herman (Denny) Farrell, was the only clubhouse boss who hadn't been given any Talent Bank patronage. The clear message of the Rosenthal column on the 1989 mayoral election, wrote Tatum, was "Circle the wagons. The blacks are coming."

THE indictment of Joe D. was seen as an especially downside event at City Hall because up to then the Mayor had been having a very good week. A *Newsday* poll published the previous Sunday had shown his popularity rebounding. His approval rating was thirty-six per cent. In the Democratic primary, Dinkins now led him by only seven points. And the poll indicated that if Koch were the Democratic nominee he could beat Giuliani—previously the wildly popular front-runner—by three points. It was true that the poll also showed that Dinkins would defeat Giuliani by six points, and it was also true that a thirty-six-point approval rating was hardly impressive, considering that Koch won with seventy-eight per cent of the vote four years ago. Still, these were highly comforting numbers compared



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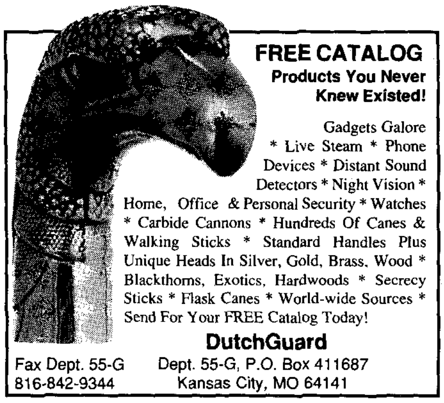

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with previous polls, in which his approval rating had hovered around twenty-five per cent. (A *Post* cartoon labelled "Eddie Takes Manhattan," a variation on "Jason Takes Manhattan," showed a menacing Koch looming above the city, brandishing a huge knife marked "New Polls," with the message "Just When You Thought It Was Safe . . . HE'S BACK.") His campaign directors were also pleased that he had done well in the first televised debate among the four Democratic candidates. He had promised ahead of time that in the debate New Yorkers would be treated to what some people—tired of spelling out what has become a major cliché of our time—refer to as K.G.; that is, that listeners would see a kinder, gentler mayor. (Last month, William Safire noted that President Bush's K.G. reference had come five years after Mario Cuomo's publicly expressed hope that the next generation "will be wiser than we are, kinder, gentler, more caring." Safire commended the Governor for kindly and gently not bawling him out for failing to give credit, and Cuomo, in the same vein, declared that Bush "uses my stuff" all the time and that he didn't mind at all.) There was no glimmer of K.G. in the Mayor's performance in the debate. However, his modified Catskill-comic style was generally deemed effective. When he was reminded the next day that Pete Hamill, the *Post* columnist, had said he seemed bored and weary of it all, the Mayor said, rolling his eyes, "What a jerk!"

POLITICS *often* has its gratifications. The faces of most of the mayoral candidates brightened considerably in recent weeks at the spectacle of Giuliani—who polls at one time suggested would be borne bodily into office on the shoulders of an adoring populace—struggling with the political ramifications of the United States Supreme Court's Webster decision. Giuliani, who once seriously considered becoming a priest, had said earlier this year that he favored the overturning of the Roe v. Wade decision and opposed government funding of abortions. On August 3rd, the day that most papers reported that, according to one poll, sixty-eight per cent of Americans do not believe that government should interfere with a woman's abortion rights, he announced a new, "clarified" position: although he remained personally opposed to abortion, he now believed that the procedure should be legal, and favored the funding of abortions for poor women. "Shame on you, Rudy" was the comment from Koch, who joined the other Democratic candidates in describing the Giuliani shift, accurately, as a "flip-flop." In a mayoral campaign event the same day, Koch was a smash at a rally across the street from the Iranian Mission to the United Nations, at Third Avenue and Fortieth Street. All six candidates turned out for the demonstration, called by the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York in the hope, presumably, of defusing the anger of some Americans against Israel for the current crisis over the safety of hostages in the Middle East. However, Koch's five mayoral opponents settled for denouncing terrorism and vowing to support President Bush in any action he took. Their positions did not play as well on the six-o'clock news as Koch's hoarse shouts urging the President to tell Iran, "If you don't get the hostages out . . . we're going to destroy Kharg Island"—the major Iranian oil refinery. The Iranians must also be told, he said, that "if every single hostage isn't freed by Monday" the United States would carpet bomb the seventy-five-mile-long Bekaa Valley, in Lebanon. This demand caused him some problems the next day when, hearing that threatening flyers ("The Only Good Arab Is a Dead Arab") were being handed out in the Arab section of Brooklyn, he hurried over there to assure the residents (many of them voters) that, as mayor, he would protect them from any anti-Arab violence. He seemed indignant that his reception was not overwhelmingly enthusiastic: some of his listeners mentioned that the visitor who would protect them from anti-Arab violence had the day before demanded that the United States carpet bomb an area where, as they noted, the population includes many thousands of women and children, some of whom might be their relatives.

AT eight-thirty on the morning after his cry for wide-scale retribution in the Middle East, the Mayor had a call from District Attorney Morgenthau. The two men are old friends; in the past, when Koch made a bet on some sporting event with the mayor of another city and New York's team lost he would pay off in bushels of apples from the District Attorney's Dutchess County farm. Morgenthau told the Mayor that Joe DeVincenzo would be indicted a few hours later. "He was not happy," Morgenthau told reporters, unnecessarily. At the height of the municipal scandals (in those days, cartoons pretending to depict City Hall had as standard props wall signs that read "TODAY'S CORRUPTION INDICTMENT"), it was claimed that any city official who might be at risk was given a sartorial tip for his arraignment: always carry a raincoat—you can drape it over your wrists and hide the *handcuffs from photographers.* On August 4th, however, it was too hot—the day's high was ninety-three—to carry a coat of any kind, and in the large pictures in the tabloids of Joe D., a tall man wearing a fixed smile, the handcuffs (or, as Comptroller Goldin would say, "manacles") were clearly visible.

Morgenthau explained that he had tried to speed up the grand jury's work, out of concern that the indictment, so embarrassing to the Mayor, would be handed up only a few weeks before the September primary. It would be hard to persuade some City Hall reporters, however, that Morgenthau hadn't managed to do his friend the Mayor one big favor. Sol Wachtler, the chief judge of the Court of Appeals, the state's highest court, attracted attention a few years back when he said that if a district attorney really has a mind to "he can indict a ham sandwich." A prosecutor, if he thinks about it, can also presumably exercise some control over when an indictment is announced. Most people who deal with the press are well aware that if you have no choice but to put out a piece of news that could pose serious problems, by far the best time to do it is on a Friday—best of all, on a hot midsummer Friday. It will then appear in the Saturday papers, the least attended to of the week. With luck, the readers will be off at the beaches or in some other preoccupying place. With luck, when they get back to town the item in question will be fading news in a pile of papers that they may never get around to reading.

The Koch administration has been particularly adept at this maneuver. Some City Hall reporters have been known to hang around on a Friday afternoon just to see what somebody will try to slip through this time. A dropped investigation? A sudden resignation? (Joe D.'s unexpected retirement was announced very late on a Friday afternoon.) Usually available is an entirely logical—and often true—explanation for the convenient timing. However it happened, Koch was undoubtedly thankful that headlines such as the *Post's* "CITY'S HALL OF SHAME WELL-STOCKED WITH SCOUNDRELS" —which was accompanied by a list of the "scoundrels" and where some of them were serving out their terms—appeared on August 5th; that is, a Saturday. The props and language of historic scandals may outlast the fame of the public figures they brought down. In Oliver North's trial, the prosecutor compared his under-the-bed money box to the "little tin box" in which Jimmy Walker's friends stored their boodle. (In view of recent New York political history, out-of-towners may not be surprised to learn that "boodle" is a New York word from the Dutch *boedel*, meaning property, which, a while after New York stopped being Nieuw Amsterdam, took on the meaning of property misappropriated by politicians.) The fact that North operated out of the basement of the White House and Joe D. worked belowstairs in City Hall, in each case in a manner allegedly unbeknownst to their chief employers, was bound to elevate the Talent Bank scandal in the public mind. ("That means I can look through the wooden floor? . . . It's ridiculous!" the Mayor said after the indictment.) And, since Watergate, the heavily freighted lines resorted to by critics of an apparently caught-out political figure are already written for them. Pointing out that "Joe D. worked twenty to twenty-five feet away" from Koch (not many New Yorkers realize what a small building City Hall is and at what close quarters people there conduct their business), Dinkins asked, inevitably, "What did the Mayor know and when did he know it?"

At his press conference after the indictment, the Mayor displayed some of the compassion that his critics have said has seemed to be lacking especially in recent mayoral performances. The

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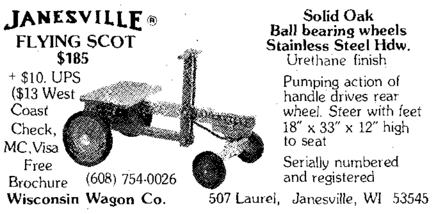
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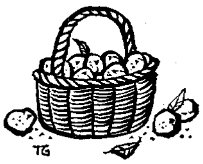
K.G. was for Joe DeVincenzo. The Mayor mentioned the money that the indictment would cost his former employee and the "grief" and "suffering" he had already endured. There was some K.G. for himself, too. "I've been through so much," he reminded reporters, referring to betrayals by former political friends. He quoted twice from a *Times* editorial, published earlier this year, which, as he remembered it ("I can only paraphrase"), indicated that the charges against the Talent Bank had been greatly overblown, that it had been, on the whole, a worthy endeavor, and that its indulgence in patronage had been "piddling"—a word that the Mayor likes but that the *Times* had not, in fact, used. "The New York *Times* put it much better than I could," the Mayor said.



Presumably, it was a blow to him when, the next day, the *Times* gave the indictment on these "piddling" charges front-page treatment, and another blow when, a few days later, the release of the Feerick Commission's formal report on the Talent Bank was at the top of the front page. The title of the seventy-four-page document was " 'Playing Ball' with City Hall: A Case Study of Political Patronage in New York City." It concluded that the Mayor bore "ultimate responsibility" for the Talent Bank's having been turned into a patronage operation, because he had failed to monitor what went on there (although First Deputy Mayor Brezenoff had known of many of the abuses at least as far back as February, 1985) and because he had failed "to communicate effectively his views of patronage." Not only had the Talent Bank's operations been a perversion of its announced purpose, said the report, but it had hurt the city government in many ways, and one way was by costing it money: to please the Mayor's office, the Bank had hired unqualified but politically well-connected candidates, and the Department of Environmental Protection and the Department of Transportation had "regularly hired candidates referred by the Mayor's Office for positions that the agencies had no current plans to fill."

After the " 'Playing Ball' with City Hall" report was released, Koch said that it was neither new nor interesting —"innocuous," in fact, was his word. He spent less time commenting on it than he spent denouncing whoever it might have been at the commission who had leaked a few pages of the report to several papers on the day of the indictment, although leaking to favored papers or favored reporters is a well-established custom at City Hall, as it is at most politicians' haunts. This early release of a few pages, he announced, had been a crime under state law. He demanded a formal investigation, in which commission members and staff would be required to testify under oath. Clearly, he said, it was someone intent on electing one of his opponents in the mayoral race. He denounced Chairman Feerick for lack of leadership, and when someone referred to the integrity commission he said, "What integrity?" A *Times* editorial published on August 9th, after the Feerick Commission report was issued, was not the kind that the Mayor could take comfort in paraphrasing. Under the heading "TALENT BANK CHICKENS, HOME TO ROOST," the editorial did complain of what it saw as the commission's bias against the Mayor but went on to say, "Mr. Koch's ultimate responsibility for the Talent Bank's sleazy operation . . . and the questions it raises about his leadership, are properly issues in the mayoral campaign." The *Times* added, "Mr. Koch deserves every taunt and brickbat hurled at him by his opponents over the Talent Bank."

Also on August 9th, a poll published in the New York *Observer* brought more news of Giuliani's downward slide. Dinkins would beat him by fourteen points in the general election, while Koch—so recently way down in the polls—would defeat him by twelve. And in the Democratic primary Dinkins and Koch were now in a dead heat. Most of the polling had been done before news of the DeVincenzo indictment had reached the public. "You've got to factor in Joe D.," Bill Lynch, Dinkins' campaign manager, said hopefully. No one knew whether that would make a difference. For the moment, there was no doubt among politicians and New Yorkers generally that just when they had thought the Mayor might be gone a loud cry was being heard up and down the streets and the avenues: "HE'S BACK." —ANDY LOGAN

JAZZ

Mingus Regained

Charles Mingus's two-hour assemblage, "Epitaph," was given its première early in June at Alice Tully Hall by a thirty-piece jazz orchestra conducted by Gunther Schuller. It marks the first advance in the composition of large-scale jazz works since Duke Ellington's 1943 "Black, Brown and Beige," a fifty-minute piece that can now be considered an overture to Mingus's leviathan, which is full of Ellington devices and Ellington melodies.

Although money problems forced Mingus to work with small groups most of his life, his head was always full of baronial sounds. These took the form of hefty works for large jazz bands, and they were realized perhaps half a dozen times either on recordings or at concerts. One of the concerts, given at Town Hall in 1962, with thirty all-star musicians on hand, was meant to be a summation of Mingus's work, but, as so often happened in his involuted life, it went wrong. The concert, moved forward five weeks at the behest of the company that was to record it, became an interminable four-hour rehearsal, in which copyists were still at work onstage and almost nothing was played in its entirety. The most commanding music was Mingus's various harangues—to his musicians, to the recording technicians, and to the restive audience. But the concert has turned out to be the acorn from which "Epitaph" grew. More than half of the eight or so numbers played that night in 1962 appeared in different form at Alice Tully Hall. They became part, it is now clear, of a large work that Mingus completed sometime in the early seventies and set aside because he was convinced that, in the rock climate of the time, he would never be able to raise the money to have it properly performed. As Mingus the master ironist knew, its title would mean nothing unless he was dead and the piece was discovered and played.

"Epitaph" was turned up by the musicologist Andrew Homzy while he was cataloguing the bags and boxes of music Mingus left behind when he died, ten years ago. Homzy writes in the program notes, "Approximately twenty scores for a large jazz orchestra written on oversized, frayed, and yellowed paper were discovered in the collection. On some of these scores the title 'Epitaph' was written; on others, 'Epitaph' appeared as a subtitle for what at first looked like independent compositions. Significantly, all the measures on all of the scores were successively numbered. . . . Further study . . . led Gunther Schuller to the conclusion that Mingus's hope 'was to find improvisation and spontaneity and freedom, and at the same time compose a large extensive frame of reference. That's the problem . . . that in jazz has not yet been solved. Only Duke Ellington really tackled it. But Ellington was still writing songs and fashioning suites around them. ["Epitaph"] has nothing to do with thirty-two-bar song forms. It is composition in the true sense.' " Homzy said just before the concert, "It's not the kind of piece where the themes are connected. It's more of an anthology, a panorama complete in itself. When I found the score, I felt the energy coming up from the pages, as if they had a life of their own. Friends have told me they had the same sensation when they looked at Mozart scores in Salzburg."

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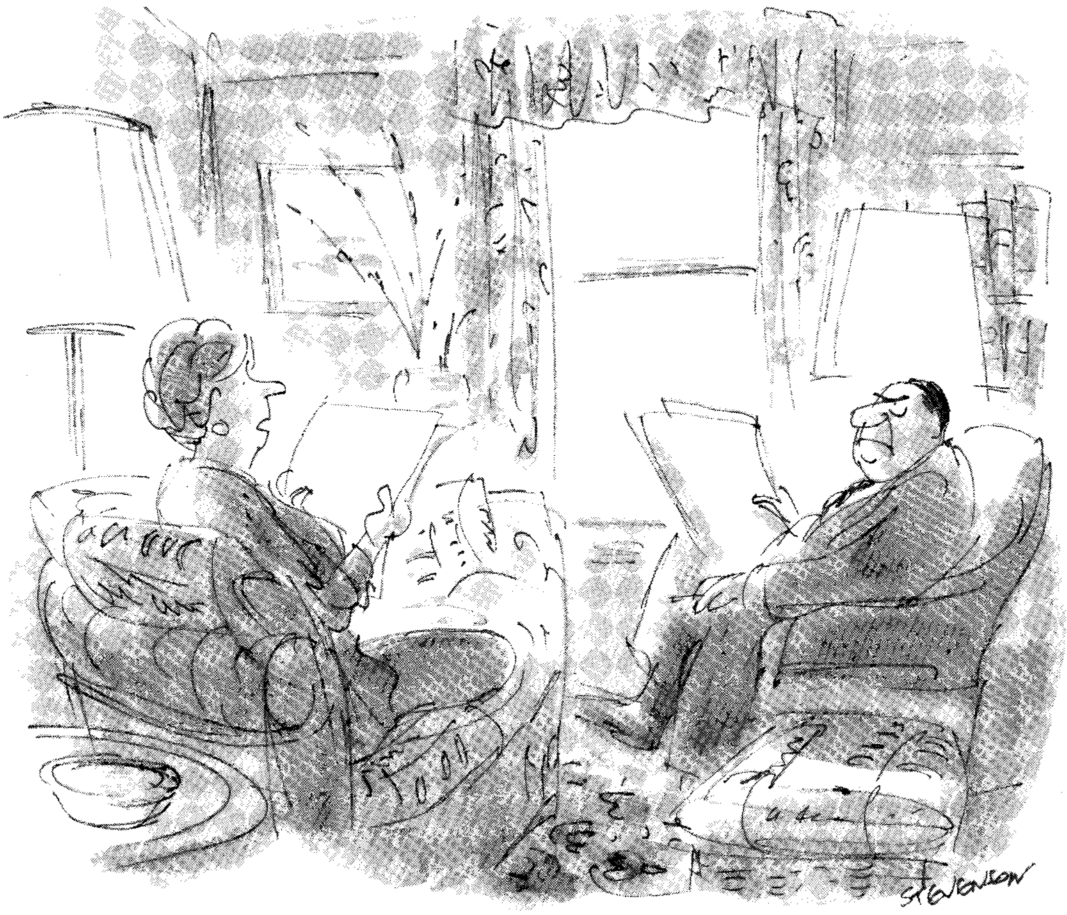
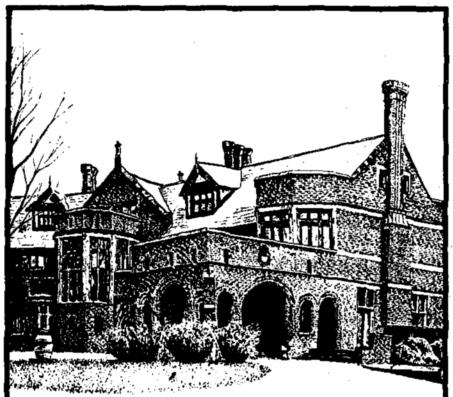


"Refresh my memory, Nelson. When was the last time you were all smiles?"



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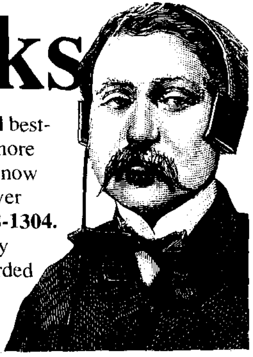

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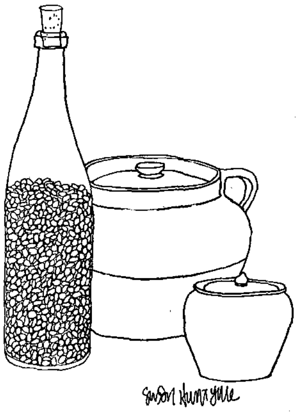
music. It could not have been easy. Here are some of the instructions that Mingus left about how he wanted one of the parts, "Please Don't Come Back from the Moon," scored: "We usually extend the E-flat-minor-A-flat-seven sound together—more or less with arabic harmonies gradually sneaking in . . . the piano gives a two-bar cue and we're back at the top again. . . . Perhaps the brass or other section could have a cue chord that one of the section men could conduct in for two or more bars. This cue can be used throughout the piece. Since there is no time bars after we reach the minor mode, I would like to have section or sections, 'patterns' riffs, that space themselves spasmodically, so the piece won't have that four-bar-eight-bar feeling. 'Like' the trpt plays the melody on the E-flat-A-flat part in harmon mute close to mike. . . . He begins with just rhythm—then little things sneak in on the third and fourth beat. Then out some bars—then in on the beat."

"Epitaph," as played at Alice Tully, contained nineteen sections, over half of them reworkings of pieces that Mingus had written and/or played from the late thirties to the early seventies. These included "Started Melody" (an improvisation on "I Can't Get Started," a song Mingus often played), "Moods in Mambo," "The Self-Portrait—The Chill of Death" (from 1939), "O.P. (Oscar Pettiford)," "Please Don't Come Back from the Moon," "Monk, Bunk and Vice Versa," "Peggy's Blue Skylight," "Better Get Hit in Your Soul," and "Noon Night." There were five balladlike sections (Mingus's ballads have little to do with the standard thirty-two-bar form, but consist of highly original melodies that determine the form), the mambo, four blues, two improvisations on standard tunes, and six uncategorizable sections, a couple of them over ten minutes long. In "Epitaph" Mingus uses every device known to jazz—and to him. The tempo doubles and is halved, decelerates and accelerates. There are accented and unaccented four-four beats, and two-four beats. There are lengthy sections without any sounded rhythm. There are ritards and places where the beat is at the very front of each note. There are riffs and ostinatos. There are breaks and stop-times and chase choruses. There are growl trumpet and growl trombone solos, pizzicato and arco bass solos, a bassoon solo, a recited poem, and chanting by the orchestra. There are all sorts of melodic interpolations—a bugle call, bits of "Tea for Two," an Ellington band call and echoes of Ellington's "Happy Go Lucky Local," a riff from the "One O'clock Jump." At the end of the final number, the entire orchestra improvises at once.

The harmonic pallet moves from huge unison chords to impenetrable dissonances. The great trombonist Jimmy Knepper, a longtime, long-suffering Mingus sideman and the present leader of Mingus Dynasty, the Mingus revival band, once said about Mingus as an orchestrator, "I never felt he was as great an orchestrator as some people made out. For instance, in 'Cumbia' he would use the trombone with the bassoon and the bass-clarinet. If you put them all together, it just sounds like mud!" There are at least half a dozen places where Mingus has four or five ensemble voices going at once—mass counterpoint that is so dense that the ear can't take it all in.



The most complicated movements—the two parts of "Main Score," and "Main Score Reprise," "The Self-Portrait—The Chill of Death," and "The Children's Hour of Dream"—are in constant motion. No phrase lasts more than two or three measures. The music resembles the way Mingus talked—in fast, irregular, often slurred bursts. The wild, acidulous, melancholy "The Children's Hour of Dream" went like this: A heavy bass ensemble chord slid into a brief, sorrowing melody, echoed by a solo alto saxophone, then by a flute; a walking-bass ostinato began and was joined by stabbing offbeat chords, played by the brass; still other instruments (it was impossible to tell in what combinations) thickened the ostinato, and there were more offbeat stabs; a reed figure shot past; a trombone figure entered and was opposed by high, light trumpet sighs; timpani strokes introduced a melody for the brass, the reeds played a balancing melody, backed by a piano tremolo and a new, very fast ostinato, and muted trumpets floated above; a short, muttering trombone figure anchored an oboe; the ostinato slowed, and a muted trombone and a tenor saxophone soloed against swelling brass and drums. Then the drums went into a kind of "Saber Dance" rhythm, there were more of the earlier, giant offbeat chords, and the mournful opening melody rolled by again. Everything speeded up, and in quick succession we heard more brass; heavy, descending, steplike unison figures played by what sounded like the entire orchestra; the opening melody replayed with its alto-saxophone flourish, again the steplike unison figures, the opening melody with its flute flourish, and—bang!—it all ended. There had been no consistent beat, yet the timbres, the accents, the phrasing were jazzlike. "The Children's Hour of Dream" is part jazz, part Stravinsky modern, part Ellington, part Mingus—a new music.

The orchestra was made up of six trumpets, six trombones, three alto saxophones, two tenor saxophones, two baritone saxophones, a bassoon, a contrabass clarinet, a tuba, two pianos, two basses, a vibraphone, a guitar, drums, and percussion. Present, among many others, were John Handy, George Adams, and Jerome Richardson on reeds; Roland Hanna and John Hicks on pianos; Urbie Green, Britt Woodman, and Eddie Bert on trombones; Randy Brecker, Lew Soloff, Wynton Marsalis, and Joe Wilder on trumpets; and Victor Lewis on drums. The soloists, battling huge sounds on every side, were adept, and four in particular shone: the trumpeters Soloff and Brecker; Michael Rabinowitz, who played five lyrical choruses of the blues on his bassoon; and the canny Jerome Richardson, who began an alto-saxophone solo with half a dozen eerie, falsetto, strangely placed, descending bent notes that settled into a fine Charlie Parker-like chorus. The musicians, with only a week of rehearsals behind them, were, clams easily accepted, heroic and even magnificent. Columbia recorded the concert, and at the end, when two sections had to be redone, Gunther Schuller told the audience, "This music is so difficult—you have no idea."

—WHITNEY BALLIETT

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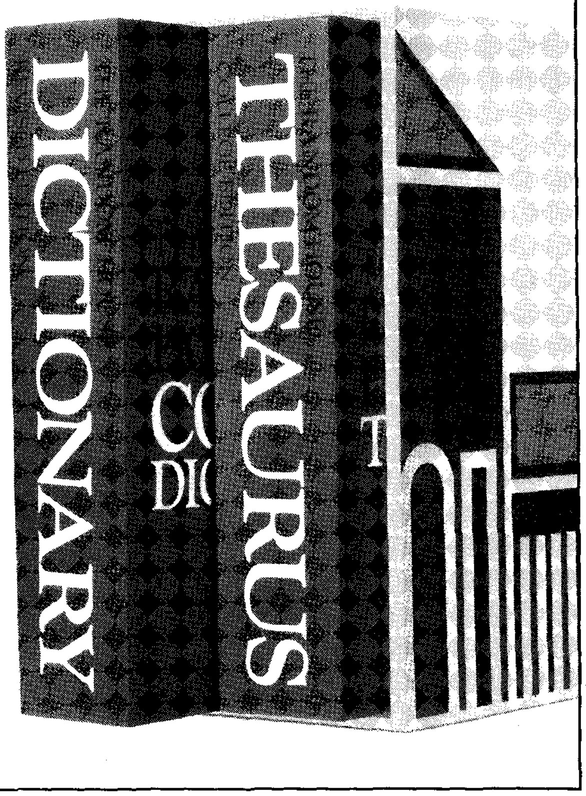

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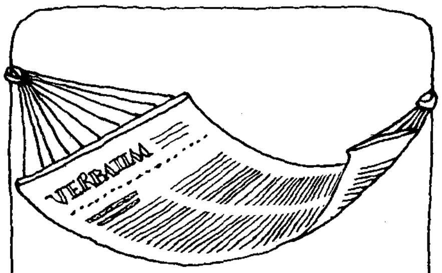

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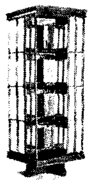

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BOOKS

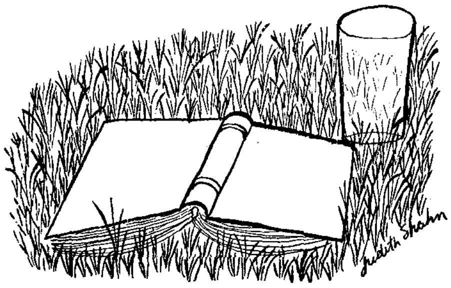
The Flare of Want

WHEN seeking a title or an epigraph for one of his many books, John Steinbeck went to his Bible, to his hymnal, to Shakespeare, Milton, Burns, Blake. Grand company, in short—and an initial signal of the grandeur he self-consciously aspired to. Nowhere is this open yearning for magnitude on display more clearly, or more successfully, than in “The Grapes of Wrath,” which first appeared half a century ago—an anniversary celebrated both by its reissuance in what can truthfully be called a de-luxe hardcover edition (Viking; $25) and by the publication of “Working Days: The Journals of ‘The Grapes of Wrath’” (edited by Robert DeMott; Viking; $18.95).

The reissued novel gets one thinking even before a paragraph of it is read. Its margins are sumptuously wide, and the spacing between lines is liberal (the original typeface and pagination have been retained); in addition, the book sports a full cloth cover rather than the three-piece binding—cloth spine and paper-over-board front and back covers—in which nearly all hardcover contemporary fiction comes housed. The result is an appealing heft and ambience—and a poignant reminder of a material generosity that, in an age of rocketing paper and distribution costs, has been largely abandoned. Somewhat paradoxically, then, this novel about want and deprivation winds up recalling a flown era of luxury. Whether American literature has progressed or declined in the last half century would be difficult to say, but few would dispute that the average book today has a shoddier feel and appearance—seems in its physical embodiment to make a less purposive and heartfelt assault upon the future—than its counterpart of fifty years ago.

Welcome in itself, the plush, slightly antiquated look of Viking's reissue harmonizes with the experience of reading or rereading Steinbeck's most famous novel. Readers like me, induced by the anniversary to examine a writer they haven't looked at in years, will find that “The Grapes of Wrath” contains in profusion the strengths commonly associated with Steinbeck (sympathy for the disenfranchised, moral urgency, narrative propulsion) and also the weaknesses (repetitiveness, simplistic politics, sentimentality). What may prove unexpected is the book's old-fashioned atmosphere—how much further from us it feels than the novels that Hemingway and Faulkner and Fitzgerald were composing at roughly the same time. One could aptly describe “The Grapes of Wrath” as a novel about the homeless, and what subject could have a more current, cutting edge than that? But in its tone, its methods, and the solutions it tenders for the social problems it documents—indeed, in its very willingness to tender solutions for colossal social problems—the book seems miles distant from most contemporary fiction. For better or worse (or, more likely, for better and worse), we have come a long way since.

“THE GRAPES OF WRATH” is immensely ambitious, and there is nothing old-fashioned about that: our preoccupation with the “big book,” the Great American Novel, seems an anchored constant in our floating literary consciousness. What does smack of yesteryear is the piece-by-piece construction and the incremental pacing by which Steinbeck introduces the Joad family and steadily tracks them, mile by plodding mile, from the barren fields of Oklahoma, where dust storms are everywhere tearing farm families from their holdings, to the “promised land” of California, where, amid God's plenty, their misery goes unrelieved because of the greed and chicanery of unseen land barons. Today, the typical stab at a Great American Novel is a much more disjointed affair, revelling in those shifts of style and viewpoint, those metaphysical and metafictional musings which are often called (perhaps with some disservice to the author of “Gravity's Rainbow”) Pynchonesque; in any event, it is far removed in spirit from the sort of family adventure—to which the word “saga” so readily attaches itself—undertaken by Grampa, Granma, Pa, Ma, and various Joad relatives and offspring. Steinbeck builds from the ground up, literally: he commences his novel with a prolonged description of the “red country” and the “gray country” of drought-scarred Oklahoma.



Of “The Grapes of Wrath” you may be tempted to say, “They don't write them like that anymore”—until you lift your gaze from the world of “serious fiction” to that of popular fiction. Maybe they *do* still write them like that, only the books hide themselves on the best-seller lists. Despite his Nobel Prize, Steinbeck seems nearer kin to a “middlebrow” writer like, say, James Michener than to those contemporary novelists apt to be dissected in graduate seminars or the literary quarterlies. And how at home the novel would seem on a current *Times* best-seller list, with a blurb reading something like “Three generations of a dispossessed Oklahoma farm family head west toward hope.” Actually, the book remains one of the best-selling American novels of all time, with some fourteen million copies sold worldwide.

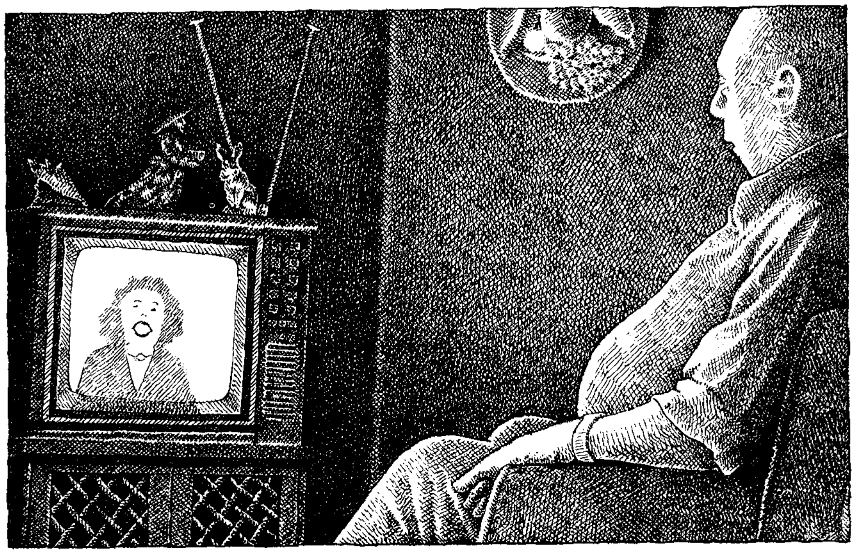
In what is one of the novel's last lines of dialogue, and arguably its spiritual summit, Ma says, “Hush. Don't worry. We'll figger somepin out.” She has silently resolved that her daughter, Rose of Sharon, who has recently given birth to a stillborn child, will now suckle a middle-aged man—a stranger—who has been found starving in a wet, chilly barn. Dialogue of this sort, steeped in cracker-barrel homeyness, would not likely be employed by a modern writer in so pivotal a moment and without the insulation of irony. But Steinbeck plays it straight. And by doing so—by respectfully allowing his Joads for six hundred pages to figger and innerduce and understan', to git a-sayin' and go a-billygoatin'—he succeeds in reaching the tender-hearted and the hard-hearted alike. Indeed, since no partisan is so zealous as the proudly hard-hearted who has experienced a softening, it makes some sense that the normally acidulous Dorothy Parker hailed the book as "the greatest American novel I have ever read."

For all its huge intentions—its weight of symbolism, prognostication, counsel—the novel shows remarkably little strain; it moves with an ease grounded, one supposes, in Steinbeck's long familiarity with his subject. In 1936, he published "In Dubious Battle," a novel about a catastrophic apple-pickers' strike. Later that year, he wrote a series of articles about squatters' camps for the San Francisco *News* and struggled with what was meant to be a "rather long novel," entitled "The Oklahomans," which he abandoned unfinished. In early 1938, during torrential rains, he discovered that thousands of migrants in Visalia, California, were "not just hungry but actually starving," and completed a satire about a strike, "L'Affaire Lettuceberg," which he soon saw fit to destroy, as a book whose aim was "to cause hatred." Visalia shook him profoundly; it appears to have brought a complexity and a majesty to the bitterness he felt about "a crime that goes beyond denunciation." By the time he started "The Grapes of Wrath," a few months later, he had done all the necessary homework.

The novel divides cleanly into three roughly equal sections: the Joads in Oklahoma, the Joads on the road, and the Joads in California. Theirs is a tale of attrition. When their odyssey begins, the family consists of twelve members, plus one outsider—a preacher, or former preacher, whose name is Jim Casy, and who vows that "where folks are on the road, I'm gonna be with them." (Catching sight of Casy's initials, the reader may immediately spot him for a Christ figure, whose apostles are the dozen Joads: the book unashamedly courts Biblical parallels.) Grampa dies suddenly, almost as soon as the family uproots, and Granma passes away slowly, as the family rolls across the Mojave Desert. Rose of Sharon's husband flees the responsibility of her pregnancy. One son disappears down a river, and another leaves the family to take a wife. The book's hero and favorite son, Tom Joad, becomes a fugitive after he avenges the murder of Jim Casy, whose spiritual reawakening as a labor leader is cut short by a goon squad of club-wielding strikebreakers. At the novel's rain-sodden, hungry, and huddling close, less than half the initial group remains.

From the outset of composition, evidently, Steinbeck envisioned that climactic moment in which Rose of Sharon takes a stranger to her breast—a scene for which Steinbeck was roundly attacked. Many critics called the book shocking or obscene. Social changes in the last five decades, however, have clearly worked toward Steinbeck's vindication. Given the overload of grotesquerie now required before any author might be labelled shocking or obscene (epithets to which many vainly aspire), and given, as well, what must be called saner attitudes about breast-feeding, the novel's ending is unlikely to rumple any sensibilities today. And, thankfully, now that time has peeled away this distorting veneer of scandal one does not find underneath it what so often lies at the bottom of the formerly shocking: a residue of the merely naughty or smarmy. One senses on Steinbeck's part no spoiling self-congratulation, no hint of the vandal, in having placed Rose of Sharon and the starving man in what is, after all, a sort of manger scene—in having utterly upended the religious and artistic icon of Mother and Child. No, Rose of Sharon's behavior is simply an extension of what the Joads have practiced from the first: in their levelheaded, makeshift fashion, they have always done what was necessary to insure that they, and those around them, survive.

THE EVENING NEWS



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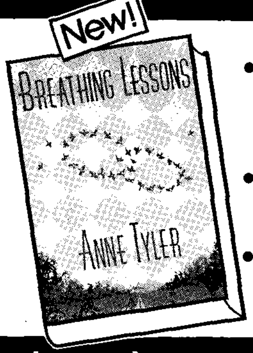
One wishes that the rest of the book had weathered the years so well. For all its layerings of tragedy, "The Grapes of Wrath" is a utopian tale, which is a difficult thing for a realistic novel to be. Steinbeck believed throughout his career in the possibility of earthly redemption, and no doubt this perception of the schism between the "is" and the "might be" was for him a great frustration and a continual creative spur. In his Nobel Prize acceptance speech, delivered in the fall of 1962, he asserted that "a writer who does not passionately believe in the perfectibility of man has no dedication nor any membership in Literature." In "The Grapes of Wrath," heaven on earth is glimpsed when the Joads settle temporarily at Weedpatch, a government-sponsored but self-policing camp for migrant workers. The family has at last found a place where "folks gits along nice." There is no crime to speak of at Weedpatch, nor any disaffection, lassitude, violence, cruelty, or selfishness. (The camp's greatest moral breach occurs when toilet paper is pilfered; the malefactors turn out to be a trio of little girls, who have cut paper dolls from it.) For obvious reasons, this section is much the flimsiest of the novel, and yet modern readers, even as they deplore Steinbeck's naïveté, may well experience a nostalgia for an era in which an esteemed author might reasonably paint such a picture. Surely no contemporary writer would propose that today's homeless, ravaged by



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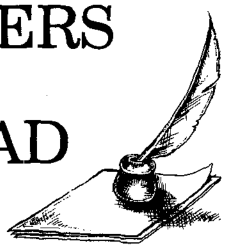

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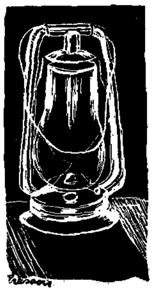
heartbreaking addictions, require of us nothing more than to be put in charge of their own lives.

Which is not to suggest that the utopian novel has vanished altogether from the scene. In my return to "The Grapes of Wrath," I was frequently reminded of Alice Walker's moving, flawed "The Color Purple"—one of few books of recent times to become, both in sales and in social impact, something of the national phenomenon that Steinbeck's novel was. Both novels dignify the lives of the semi-literate; boldly risk being dismissed as sentimental in an attempt to be life-affirming; indict an insular, racist society; speak, with little authorial intercession, through the voices of the rural poor; and project a vision of terrestrial paradise once certain "ism"s are recognized and repudiated. (In place of Steinbeck's monopolistic capitalism, Walker's demons are racism and, particularly, sexism; by her novel's close, the latter is sufficiently overcome so that Albert, the former woman-beater and all-around macho man, has become a seamster, contentedly passing his days on the veranda stitching up unisex trousers for a cottage industry called Folkspants, Unlimited.)

In "The Grapes of Wrath," as in "The Color Purple," the unlettered are forever pushing toward a poetry of folk wisdom; everybody's always itching to get off a good aphorism. Ma tells Pa, "Man, he lives in jerks—baby born an' a man dies, an' that's a jerk—gets a farm an' loses his farm, an' that's a jerk. Woman, it's all one flow." Pa tells Uncle John, "Sometimes a fella got to sift the law." Tom reassures Casy that the latter hasn't begun "preaching" again: "Preachin's a kinda tone a voice, an' preachin's a way a lookin' at things." Needless to say, the result can be an air of contrivance. There are moments when the characters seem mere mouthpieces; their conversations have the amplitude and reverberation—but also the hollowness—of speech delivered through a microphone. In our own time, any such attempt to put highly poeticized philosophizing in the mouths of the poor and uneducated might be thought foredoomed (or, at least, fore-flawed) if we did not know of a few glittering instances in which it comes off beautifully. A theatregoer doesn't flinch when Linda Loman, in Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman," announces that "a man is not a bird, to come and go with the springtime," and then launches into a little sermon about the innate dignity of the "small man." Nor does a reader feel anything but thrilled when, in Robert Frost's "The Death of the Hired Man," Warren and Mary trade apothegms: "Home is the place where, when you have to go there, they have to take you in," Warren says, and Mary replies, "I should have called it something you somehow haven't to deserve." Admittedly, Miller and Frost have the advantage of working in inherently artificial genres. No one can plausibly demand that stage speech or blank-verse dialogue satisfy all the strictures of naturalism. But things are different in a novel like "The Grapes of Wrath," where a documentary veracity is expected; one shudders a little as Ma uncorks a line like "They was the time when we was on the lan'," or "Worse off we get, the more we got to do." Here is that old joke-jingle: the *poet* who doesn't *know it*. For Ma's reflections are poetic not just in their compression but in their metre. They are iambic-pentameter lines that could be fitted into "The Death of the Hired Man" without occasioning the faintest metrical tremor.

As is generally the case when diaries or drafts surrounding a famous literary work come to light, "Working Days: The Journals of 'The Grapes of Wrath'" provides more confirmation than revelation. Most of what is here could be intuited from the novel itself. That the book was written rapidly, in a fiercely concentrated five-month outpouring, comes as no surprise: the writing feels all of a piece. Nor is one surprised to discover that Steinbeck did little revising. If the achievement of his prose is that he everywhere manages to avoid clutter—no small feat—he pulls off few of those bravura touches that arise when, over time, one stylistic refinement unlocks another. His prose is a bit like a cleared, swept, polished ballroom floor on which nobody dances. What *is* surprising about "Working Days" is just how scanty are its collateral pleasures. Precious few nuggets of humor, intelligence, or curiosity glint within it. What one primarily absorbs is Steinbeck's guilt-inspired drive, and one leaves the book hoping forlornly that he learned to like himself better as the years went by. He rebukes himself on page after page for not working hard or fast enough. He fusses interminably over self-fixed schedules, word counts, and page counts. Rarely have I entered so claustrophobic a journal, and I'm not sure I've ever come across anything so psychologically straitened in connection with an enduring work of art—which, for all its shortcomings, "The Grapes of Wrath" appears to be.



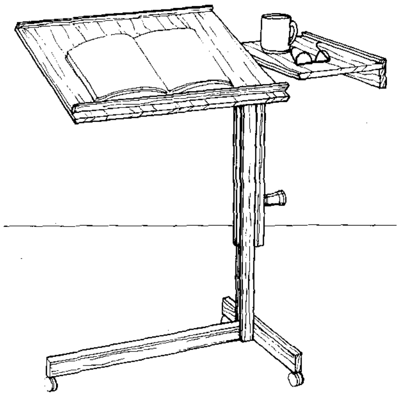
Perhaps the chief wonder of the novel is that it's as good as it is. Steinbeck was a writer of such variable strengths and such uncertain instincts that any attempt at an epic novel would seem destined for failure. What probably saved "The Grapes of Wrath" was his reservoir of rage. He saw his fellow-Californians responding with fear rather than charity to "the flare of want" in the eyes of the newcomers, and this inhumanity liberated him: it justified his characteristic eagerness to lecture his readers, lent a dignity to his indiscriminate savagings of the affluent (into whose ranks the book would irreversibly propel him), and excused his woolly theorizing about the collective "Manself." The book is a call to arms, and it manages, in the enormity of the iniquity it exposes, to render irrelevant many of the aesthetic qualifications it raises along the way.

It is tempting to construct a mystery around Steinbeck's precipitous decline after "The Grapes of Wrath." His next novel, "The Moon Is Down," could be described as an attempt at the second-rate which falls well short of its goal. Although he subsequently published, in 1952, his largest novel, "East of Eden"—a burst footlocker of a book—much of his creative energy after "The Grapes of Wrath" was channelled into nonfiction, a genre for which his talents were strikingly maladapted. Over the years, his politics drifted to the right (although this champion of the downtrodden worker was never the doctrinaire communist that his supporters and his enemies, for their contrary purposes, sometimes made him out to be), and in his last years he was a staunch defender of American involvement in Vietnam. Liberals might wish to view Steinbeck's artistic decline as a concomitant of his growing political benightedness; conservatives might see in his fall from critical esteem the spiteful manipulation of a liberal literary establishment. But it appears, simply, that without the fervor that came from his being a lone artist on a crusade ("The death of children by starvation in our valleys is simply staggering," he wrote to his agent three months before beginning "The Grapes of Wrath") Steinbeck's own natural deficiencies came to the fore. He lacked the wit and precision necessary for the poised irony so congenial to the conservative (however far to the right he might journey, he was never going to sound like Evelyn Waugh), and his one sizable attempt at political satire, "The Short Reign of Pippin IV," is an embarrassment. His talent for killing a joke was almost—but unfortunately not quite—laughable. In "Travels with Charley," an account of some rambles around America with his poodle, he ponders for several pages how his pet may respond to its first glimpse of the redwoods. ("After this experience he might be translated mystically to another plane of existence, to another dimension, just as the redwoods seem to be out of time and out of our ordinary thinking. The experience might even drive him mad. . . . On the other hand, it might make of him a consummate bore.") But when, at last, Charley was let loose among "these ambassadors from another time," he gazed at them with indifference at first. Then he discovered a little willow, and, "after turning this way and that to get range and trajectory, he fired." And I'm afraid that's the punch line.

Most books by Steinbeck leave one unable to shake a regretful sense—in view of his many strengths—of how much better a writer he might have been. With "The Grapes of Wrath," though, one is cheered to see an artist creating something far better—in view of his weaknesses—than anything one might realistically have expected. If the book offers few surprises the second time around, this in part attests to its merits: even its peripheral incidents linger in the mind. In addition, the book occasionally offers one of the rarest and most gratifying pleasures that literature opens up to us. We behold in it that little miracle of transformation by which, with just a bit of fleshing out, a stick figure becomes an Everyman.

—Brad Leithauser

Lay Down Your Arms



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BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

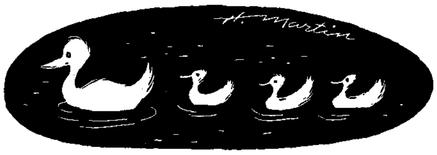
MR. FIELD'S DAUGHTER, by Richard Bausch (Linden; $18.95). Fathers—aggrieved fathers, lapsed fathers, fathers who belong to a widowers' club called The Chessmen—are everywhere in Mr. Bausch's fine novel. There is James Field, a Duluth bank officer with an "oddly expectant, rounded face," hiding in bushes outside the run-down house in rural Illinois where his just eloped teen-age daughter, Annie, is living with a handsome, predatory dopehead named Cole Gilbertson. There is Gilbertson himself, hiding behind cars parked near a schoolyard in Duluth, watching his daughter, Linda. There is also Louis Wolfe, a "squarish, big-shouldered man," who owns the Star Dust Record Store in Duluth and stumbles into a love affair with Annie (who doesn't fail to notice that he is old enough to be her father). Finally, there is Alice Minneford's Uncle Ellis (Alice is Gilbertson's pill-dazed travelling companion), with his five children, unfazed by their racket and the disarray of his home. The story is tightly wound, and a gun goes off in a credible way. One night before this happens, Annie says to Louis, "What people visit on each other out of something like love. It's enough for all the world's woe."

RAW: OPEN WOUNDS FROM THE CUTTING EDGE OF COMMIX, edited by Art Spiegelman and Françoise Mouly (Penguin; $14.95, paper). This collection displays a full range of anomie and anxiety and what can be called postmodern humor—the kind where the fact that there isn't a punch line is the joke. There's also the kind, luckily, where every line packs a punch, like the ten impeccably rendered Bazooka-gum-style panels of "Inferno Joe." The humor in the chapter of Mr. Spiegelman's ongoing and deservedly celebrated "Maus" is gentler and considerably grimmer, being about Mauschwitz. The context shift (high art, the horrors of recent history as cartoons) likewise tickles in two works about Communism in suburbia: "Margaret Neely as Peg" is the Levittown wife of a Red spy in an aircraft plant, while "Karla in Kommieland" dreams of turning in parents who dream of Uncle Joe to Senator Joe. As Edward Sorel opines in the final frame of the volume, "It really takes a special kind of talent."

THE MAN WITH THE LITTLE DOG, by Georges Simenon, translated from the French by Jean Stewart (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $16.95). The stream of strange psychological studies with which Simenon concerned himself in the intervals between the Maigret adventures runs refreshingly on. This 1964 novel, which here makes its first American appearance, takes the form of a pre-suicide journal written by a Paris solitary named Félix Allard, forty-eight years old, overweight, and a clerk in a bookstore, whose only friend is a part-poodle called Bib. We learn about Allard's contemplated suicide, then about his acquisition of Bib, then about his job, then that he was once happily married, with two children and a handsome income, then that he served time in prison, then about the nature of his crime, and then his real reason for doing what he did. The telling of the story is as bland as the title, but the story itself is piercing.

GENERAL

THE YELLOW KIDS: FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS IN THE HEYDAY OF YELLOW JOURNALISM, by Joyce Milton (Harper & Row; $22.95). A spirited, solidly researched recapitulation of the eighteen-nineties story of the cutthroat contest for supremacy between Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World* and William Randolph Hearst's New York *Journal*. The focus here is on the star foreign correspondents for both papers, and the role they and the "yellow press" played in stirring up the trouble in Cuba that ripened into the Spanish-American War. These correspondents, known as "special commissioners," were a loose, mercenary, and amiably amoral band of filibusters who risked their lives in hostile territory to scoop each other, justify their expense accounts, and add lustre to their papers. Among the stars were Richard Harding Davis, Stephen Crane, and, above all, a now forgotten character named Sylvester (Harry) Scovel, who crowned a brilliant career by socking the commanding American general in the jaw at the ceremony marking the Spanish surrender.



THE PLEASURES OF READING IN AN IDEOLOGICAL AGE, by Robert Alter (Simon & Schuster; $18.95). This timely study takes issue with contemporary schools of literary criticism that maintain that the literary canon is an instrument of domination, or that literary works are no different from other verbal communications, or that a literary text has no meaning. Mr. Alter demonstrates that literature is an art, with its own distinctive characteristics. He makes his case with good sense, good temper, and sensitivity, and keeps the discussion narrow, refuting statements about specific literary works but not debating Marxism, feminism, structuralism, or deconstructionism. Yet as he proceeds on his lucid and moderate way the reader suspects that, after all, the argument *is* about ideology—that today's ideologues, like many of their forerunners, disapprove of literature because they disapprove of human beings, whose diversity, passions, and playfulness literature preserves from generation to generation.

GOD'S DUST: A MODERN ASIAN JOURNEY, by Ian Buruma (Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $18.95). An account of travels through eight countries of Southeast and Far East Asia which concentrates on the crisis of identity that has overcome these lands as they confront modernization and the blandishments of Western materialism. The author, a journalist who lives in Hong Kong, describes what happens to people "when the loyalties and traditions of the village break down, and are replaced by the complexities of the modern world." The countries that he considers in this thoughtful and penetrating book are Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea, Taiwan, Singapore, the Philippines, Japan, and Burma, all of which have experienced profound social and cultural changes—all, that is, but Burma, whose ruling powers closed off their country from the modern world for two decades.

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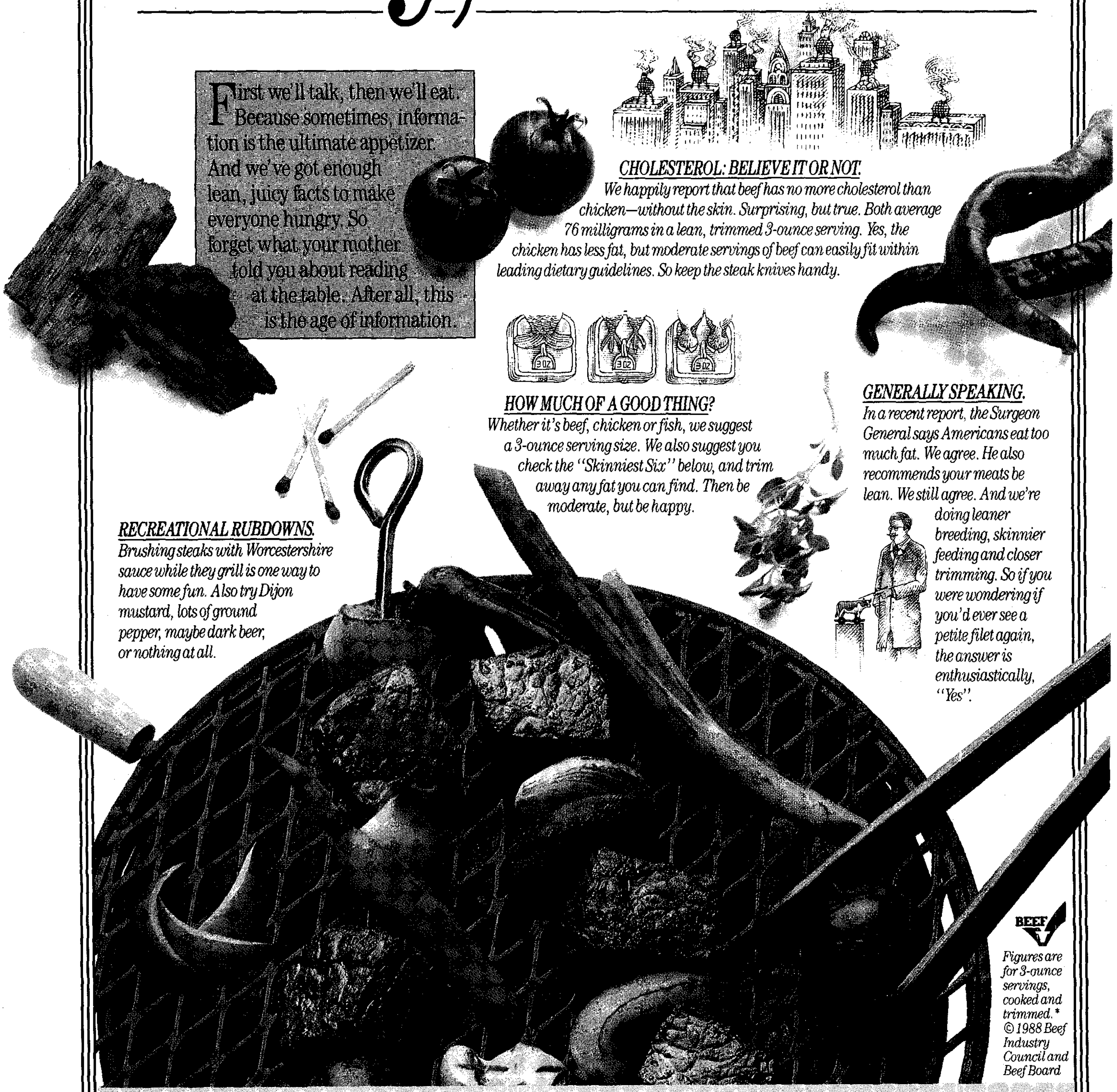

First we'll talk, then we'll eat. Because sometimes, information is the ultimate appetizer. And we've got enough lean, juicy facts to make everyone hungry. So forget what your mother told you about reading at the table. After all, this is the age of information.

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In a recent report, the Surgeon General says Americans eat too much fat. We agree. He also recommends your meats be lean. We still agree. And we're doing leaner breeding, skinnier feeding and closer trimming. So if you were wondering if you'd ever see a petite filet again, the answer is enthusiastically, "Yes".

RECREATIONAL RUBDOWNS.
Brushing steaks with Worcestershire sauce while they grill is one way to have some fun. Also try Dijon mustard, lots of ground pepper, maybe dark beer, or nothing at all.

BEEF

*Figures are for 3-ounce servings, cooked and trimmed.**
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ROUND TIP	TOP LOIN	TOP ROUND	EYE OF ROUND	TENDERLOIN	SIRLOIN
6.4 gms total fat*	7.6 gms total fat*	5.3 gms total fat*	5.5 gms total fat*	7.9 gms total fat*	7.4 gms total fat*
(2.3 gms sat. fat)	(3.0 gms sat. fat)	(1.8 gms sat. fat)	(2.1 gms sat. fat)	(3.1 gms sat. fat)	(3.0 gms sat. fat)
162 calories	172 calories	162 calories	155 calories	174 calories	177 calories

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